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Next Issue....

AND I HAVE SEEN THE HARBOR
 A SPACE SHUTTLE REPORT
 BY CLIFFORD R. MCMURRAY

AN INTERVIEW WITH
 MICHAEL WHELAN

A FEW SURPRISES, THE REGULAR
 COLUMNS...THREE HUNDRED
 BOOK REVIEWS...MORE ALIEN
 THOUGHTS THAN YOU WANT TO
 READ....

BUT WHY DOES
 GEIS REALLY
 WANT MY OLD
 ZIP CODE?



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ALIEN THOUGHTS

BY THE EDITOR

FINALLY!—A SOLUTION TO MY MOST DEPRESSING PRESSING PROBLEM.....

Whaaat? Editorials. Set piece editorials. I quail at having to write them for SFR. Nothing comes to mind that hasn't been tromped through before.

What should I do?

What should I do?

For a month now I have watched with morbid eye as the days whither away. The readers want more of my writing in SFR. More editorials. AARRRRGH.

I even beat the bushes of my brain looking for Alter Ego with intent to ask his advice. Even... *Shudder* to allow him to write an editorial two. But Alter is gone. Even his used synapse collection is gone. I feel naked, somehow.

Where is he now? More to the point, in whose brain is he now fiendishly residing? Hmm... It seems to me Elton Elliott has been acting strangely lately.

But that is neither here nor sideways. My problem looms, dark and stormy.

Yet there is a way... Time honored. Even in the Geis tradition. Why not...why not...

I hesitate to say it, my less do it. But why not an editor's diary?

I'm getting enough mail of one kind or another to provide raw material for a sloppy, uninhibited, space-filling commentary.

I'll lose friends and alienate strangers. Perfect.

I'll start tomorrow. It now is 5:44 PM and time for me to go upstairs, pour myself my usual half glass of homemade wine, turn on the bastard Sears TV (with its flicker ing green-tinged color---got to get that mother fixed one of these days) and watch CBS NEWS to learn the latest increment of disaster.

6-9-81 Card from a long-time freelance pro writer whose last book hit the paperback bestseller top ten briefly a few months ago. Names eliminated to prevent lawsuits.

'Jeez, _____ Books really took me. Not only did they disappear two extra printings of _____ but they have reprinted and commissioned from someone else an atrocious sequel, using my characters and part of my scenario (all registered with the Guild, but what



can you do?). I do not expect to ever see another God-damned nickel from the sons of bitches. Only recourse is never to do business with them again.'

I suppose these stories of major publisher ripoffs will become more and more frequent as book sales tail off more and more the rest of this year. Some writers who have been lucky don't really believe "name" publishers do this sort of thing.

Shit. I'm beginning to think everybody skims and cheats.

Burt Libe is tiring; I get these long letters from him (to me 500 words is a long letter) frequently, and I always feel guilty and inadequate when I respond with short (two or three brief paragraphs---if he's lucky) pithy responses.

His latest takes me to task---as have others---in this vein:

'... (my) I'd want to know why, with so much talent, you spent all those many years writing all that useless porn shit. He thinks you ain't even good at it. Well, I guess some people are great at some things, but feel better with and insist upon doing other things. So, Geis, I've heard several people attack you personally for your infatuation with porn. They're entitled to their opinion as far as I'm concerned. But when I see someone failing to exploit his real talents, I gotta get after 'im.'

I often wonder, too, why I went from 1959 to 19and76 or so writing sex novels. In fact, counting STAR

WHORES AND THE CORPORATION STRIKES BACK, you could say I'm still in that bag.

Just something fixed deep in my secret psyche, I suppose. I've always been lucky.

I disagree that sex novels are useless. Or shit. The worst of them give the buyer what he or she wants! The best of the sex novels published please their readers mightily and (I hope) give an added intensity to the pleasures of masturbation.

I've been told by editors that I write damned good sex novels.

They've always bought them, anyway. And readers have said the same.

So I have spent maybe 23 years of my life writing close to 90 or so sex novels which have helped people get more pleasure out of life.

I'm happy with that. I'm proud of that.

I'm not sure if Burt thinks my real talents are in other types of fiction---or writing for and editing SFR and/or CONSPIRACY NEWSLETTER.

I enjoy all the kinds of writing I do. I'll probably continue doing them as long as possible.

Burt also [with others] suggests I should give up my desperate non-professional stance in SFR and accept all the outside advertising I can get in order to expand the magazine or preferably go bi-monthly.

If I'm such a great fanzine editor, howcum so many people want me to change my style and policies?

I prefer to not bother with advertising, period. I don't want the subtle pressures that advertisers exert [without saying a word] on editors and publishers of small press magazines.

I don't want a 130 page zine one year and a 48 page zine the next as advertising vanishes for one reason or another. I don't want to be in the position of depending on advertising for profit or continued existence.

This is the way I think. Love me, love my policies.

A gentleman from Canada sent me 84 pages of a sex/porn novel he's been noodling at for (he says) 20 years.

Well, he accompanied it with compliments re THE CORPORATION STRIKES BACK, and enclosed an article on Reagan's military spending build-up and the economy which I hadn't seen. Appreciate them.

The 84 pages are well written and non-commercial. I can say some nice things about the story and make some criticisms.

The point is I don't want to be sent manuscripts. Published books, okay. Mss. have to be sent back, and too often the sender doesn't think to enclose return postage. At to-

day's rates returning a ms. costs me about a dollar.

I'm speaking of book manuscripts here, mind.

I'm using items from my mail here to comment upon, to present attitudes, which normally wouldn't be printed in the letter column. So be aware that your mailing to me may be used. I'll of course be cautious in using names and etc. But you can always insure total privacy by noting 'Not for publication' on anything, or sections of whatever.

6-11-81 I get on a lot of mailing lists. The latest fruit of that process is a sample copy of AMERICAN ATHEIST--A Journal of Atheist News And Thought. This is a copy of the February issue. [On the cover it is recorded thus: 'PLUVIOSE (February) 11981; Vol.23, No.2'. This self-conscious symbolic rejection of the Christian names for the months, and the acceptance of the Roman (pagan--previous religion's) names seems labored and awkward. But wotthehell. AMERICAN ATHEIST is letter size offset, 24 pages, and seems badly edited and misconceived: there is precious little news and the bulk of the magazine seemed obsessed with past disbelievers from Medieval times onward, as well as foreign atheistic movements.

The magazine is dull, turgid, and virtually irrelevant to the modern world.

God is really dead for most people under fifty in America today. They don't see any evidence anywhere that God exists and is looking into and ordering the affairs of mankind. Just the opposite.

And all the magic and supernatural powers seem to come from and be used by scientists.

The basic dogma of Christian belief---supernatural evil and vile, hellish creatures---(for instance) have been taken and commercialized and reduced to fantasy and moronmental-food by TV, movie producers, and horror writers of blockbuster fiction. Because most of this use of Christian dogma is very badly done it is rejected by most halfway intelligent people as impossible, implausible, incredible---and God goes along with Satan and demons and werewolves and Rosemary's baby and an afterlife in its many commercial variations.

There is still a lot of lip-service Christianity practiced for social and business reasons. But True Believers are diminishing [despite periodic media hoopla] in numbers and influence.

AMERICAN ATHEIST is locked into the past. It would up its circulation and effectiveness if it used

humor, mockery, sarcasm, ridicule and satire more.

But True Believer Atheists are a humorless lot. I am an atheist, but not dedicated; my position is that I don't think there is or was a Creator. Certainly not a God who dabbled in Earth affairs in times past.

Nor do I think there is an afterlife. But I'm willing to be pleasantly surprised after I die.

6-12-81 David _____ notes in a letter that he enjoys the series of essays by Barry Malzberg in SFR ("Engines of the Night"), but observes that Malzberg's list of ten best sf stories has one perhaps unnoticed characteristic: "Not a single one of them can be looked upon as having a happy or even a hopeful ending."

Aha. Barry, is your basic worldview showing here?

David also notes:

'The Gene Wolfe interview had one section that struck directly home to me. In the part where he says that "Good writing is concrete ... an educational bureaucrat says that someone has a learning disability; a good writer says the same person is lazy or stupid; ..."

'I am a college mathematics professor at a New Jersey State College. Our graduates in the Liberal Arts are required to take a mathematics course in order to graduate. Over the years I have spoken to numbers of students who have claimed that, despite their high intelligence, they simply could not learn mathematics. The numbers seem to be increasing lately. Two weeks ago I attended a meeting of our faculty senate where a serious proposal was made that some students be declared

"learning disabled" (how determined was unspecified) and that their college programs be modified in "certain areas" (read: Mathematics and English) so that they can be graduated. I was either ignored or laughed at when I asked if stupidity can be considered a learning disability.

'The proposal was sent back to committee - but it will surface again. A letter in the student newspaper recently objected to there being any required courses for a college degree. Claimed that required courses was a violation of her student rights.'

What kind of math is required: algebra? Trig? Calculus? I can sympathize with math-deaf students to a degree; I had a hell of a time with second year algebra and trig. Almost didn't graduate high school because of it. While making top grades in English and writing editorials and a column ('The Professor of Screwlooseology'---God!) for the school weekly paper.

I suppose standards have slipped since 1942-45.

But do you find a lot of engineering and math majors who cannot pass basic English courses?

I tend to think laziness and disinterest is the major problem, though. For my part, I could not see any use of arcane mathematics in my future life.

Of course if there were no required courses in college most students would happily take a variety of easy, no-work courses. Movie Watching 105, for instance, or The Significance of Benny Hill in British Culture. [Home study permitted.]

Personal bibliographical note here: a reader has a copy of a porno novel titled AUNTIE'S RAGING DESIRE by Peggy Swanson. He wants to know

YOU SEE THAT WINDOW UP THERE? THE ONE WITH THE BARS MADE OUT OF STARSHIP COVERS. THEY SAY THAT'S WHERE GEIS LOCKED UP ALTER.
THE FIEND.



if I wrote it. He sent zeroes of the covers and credit pages and the first page of Chapter One.

I used to write a lot of sex novels under the pseudo of Peggy Swenson. Also, one as Peggy Swann, and once a publisher (or his printer) screwed up and published a Swenson novel as Swanson. That was in 1964, and the title was *LESBIAN LURE* [Playtime Book published by Neva Paperbacks inc.]

But *AUNTIE'S RAGING DESIRE* was published in 1975 by Embassy House of San Rafael, CA., and I did not write it. The first page of text ain't my style. I have no memory of it at all.

But now I'm curious. Is there a real Peggy Swanson out there writing porno? Was the editor merely trying to "cash in" on the (at one time) dedicated readership of Peggy Swenson novels?

Mats Linder, of Sweden, who publishes *SUMMA*, wrote to request permission to translate and reprint Mack Reynolds' article, "Science Fiction and Political Economy" [SFR #36]. He says that is the best thing he has seen on the subject. He wants Mack Reynolds' address.

Mats also mentions the "Swedish Post Office is [as of June 1], raising the rate for printed matter postage 300 to 500% by proudly declaring all mail to be letter mail!" I've been following the statist travails of the Swedish establishment as they face ruin and bankruptcy of the nation because of incredibly generous welfare programs and incredibly confiscatory taxes on the wealth-producers.

I wonder if "printed matter" in Sweden will now be delivered as quickly as letter mail? Or if letter mail will slow down to printed matter delivery rates?

As to the reprint permission: I am forwarding a copy of Mats' letter to Mack. As noted in the copyright notice in every issue of SFR, "One-time rights only have been acquired from signed or credited contributors, and all other rights are hereby assigned to the contributors."

That means I cannot give reprint permissions. I forward the query.

HEY! STOP, OK? WHEN
I SAID YOU OUGHT TO
RECYCLE YOUR HUGOS
I WAS ONLY
JOKING!



changes in SFR when something isn't working or when something's gotta give.

Since Orson Scott Card burned out as short fiction (magazine, mostly) reviewer/columnist, the short fiction reviews section has inevitably taken up more space than it should.

And more and more often readers have said, "What's the point of reviewing magazines that are off the stands before I get the reviews?"

It's a good point. I tend to think magazine publishers will fill recent back issue orders, but another factor is more compelling: too often there are only one or two good stories in a given issue of a magazine, and for the sf/fantasy reader who isn't a steady buy-no-matter what collector or subscriber, the cost and effort of acquiring a back issue of a sf magazine isn't worth it. Interest is short and inertia is long.

So what the short fiction reviews were a guide to professional anthologists who were happy to have a flag sunk into good stories for their future reference.

Further, four or five pages of the opinions of Orson Scott Card are worth it. Five or six pages of short fiction opinions by (current) lesser knowns are not worth it.

AND---the reader of SFR will be able to enjoy the cream of the stories from the magazines in the many annual BEST OF-- volumes and in the frequently published story collections by individual authors.

None of this will pull the arrow of outrageous fortune from the breasts of the reviewers and from the authors who always hunger for notice.

Now---if SFR were a weekly.... But it isn't, will never be, so forget it.

But the prime reason for this change is to make room for more and more of these editorial musings, reactions, and savage changes. An editor's diary is space consuming. And my mail is becoming ever more interesting.

I am retaining Darrell Schweitzer's Small Press Reviews, though, because I have a bias for the small press efforts, and because in my opinion Darrell is a knowledgeable and interesting reviewer. His reviews, if he should choose to continue them, will complement my own Small Press Notes.

7-12-81 This is short hairs time: tomorrow these pages go to the printer. I have filled holes created by promised material that didn't arrive, and I have made ruthless editorial decisions. It happens every time. I'm used to it.

Next issue I'll publish the Michael Whelan interview! He called about a week and a half ago and suggested he send some updating answers

6-16-81 THE COMMAND HAS COME DOWN THE LINE: DEATH TO THE SHORT FICTION REVIEWS THE CREATOR DECREED. AND IT WAS DONE. THE HAVOC WAS HORRIBLE. STRONG REVIEWERS MPT. WEAK REVIEWERS....

Well, not to make too big a thing of it, but in the tradition of Genghis Khan and Nero, sometimes I make

ROBERT SHECKLEY

SFR: Now that you're fiction editor of OMNI, how does it feel to be on the opposite end of the manuscript submission process?

SHECKLEY: Naturally it's very different. It feels very good. For a writer it's certainly a valuable insight into how the other part of the publishing process works.

SFR: It seems to me that the short stories in OMNI are not what the sales really hinge on. Is this true?

SHECKLEY: OMNI sells, I think, as a total package. It's a very good mix of short stories, articles, columns and graphics. Stories certainly are a vital part of this. I don't think OMNI would be OMNI if it didn't have fiction.

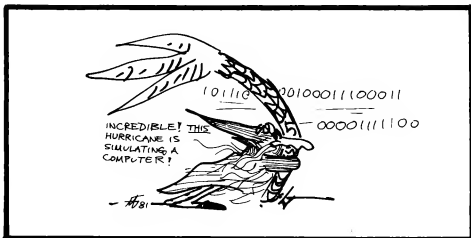
SFR: But since the sales don't totally hinge on the fiction, doesn't this give you the opportunity to do risky and far-out things and make OMNI the cutting edge of the field?

SHECKLEY: I do think so. I certainly hope so. In theory, anyway, since we pay the top rates, we should get first look at everything, and there is a very fine chance here to open up new story territory.

SFR: How much of a problem do you have with the fact that much of your audience hasn't read science fiction before? Doesn't this prevent you from running things they would regard as esoteric?

SHECKLEY: I don't think so. Although our audience is not primarily a science fiction audience, we have done and will do very straight science fiction. I've done stories by Bob Silverberg, say, that are absolutely pure SF, with no compromise to a less informed readership. I do keep in mind the fact that my readers are not sophisticated in science fiction, but I wouldn't say that this stops me from buying what I think is good science fiction.

SFR: Did you find the field a lot narrower when you began writing than it is today?



SHECKLEY: Not narrower. GALAXY then was a very active market, and my mainstay. I sold stories to Campbell also. There was a new look and a new format for some time in AMAZING and FANTASTIC. There was F&SF. In a way it had for me then the feeling of being a nice compact field. There were salvage magazines also, then, which there aren't now. When I started out, PLANET STORIES was going still and Doc Lowndes' FUTURE also. There were more outlets. They paid of course far less.

SFR: How long had you been reading science fiction and how long had you started to write it before you started to sell?

SHECKLEY: I had been reading science fiction, I'm pretty sure, since I learned how to read. Certainly since the age of six or seven. In my parents' house I found some of the Edgar Rice Burroughs novels. I found Wells and Verne. Soon I found the science fiction pulps also. I really grew up reading science fiction.

SFR: The kind of satirical science fiction that you began writing almost at once was very much different from what you grew up reading. Was this a reaction, or were you shaped to write what you did by market conditions in the early 1950s, or what?

SHECKLEY: No, not at all. This was simply the kind of science fiction

story I was best able to do. I had a combination of interests which led me that way. First of all I was interested in science fiction. I was very interested in general literature, especially in parody and satire, and I was rather weak and not terribly interested in science, except in a conceptual way. So this mix of things led me into the sort of story I wrote. But I was writing my own version of mainstream science fiction.

SFR: How much did Horace Gold direct your career?

SHECKLEY: Horace liked what I was doing. It was simply a happy meeting. I found out early on that I was not really a Campbell writer, although I did sell him some stories. He was not the great inspiration for me that he was for a lot of other people. Horace didn't guide me. I've always had very firm ideas about what I want to write. He bought what I wrote.

SFR: Did he ever feed you ideas?

SHECKLEY: Horace would sometimes feed me ideas. I don't know that I ever used one, especially back then. I was very resistant to other people's ideas. I really wanted to do the whole job.

SFR: Did you ever have any problems with his celebrated tendency to rewrite stories?

SHECKLEY: He only rewrote one story of mine. I didn't know about that until after it appeared. I wasn't happy about it being done, but the job he did on it was rather good.

SFR: You stopped appearing in the magazine regularly about the time Gold stopped editing. Was this a coincidence?

SHECKLEY: No. I think a part of why I wrote for Gold was because it was exciting. Horace was always asking me for stories. I saw him almost every week. I played in Horace's weekly Friday night poker games. It was part of my world. When Horace left, that world was not ever quite the same. The gang of us who were there at the start -- people like Fred Pohl, Jerry Bixby, Algis Budrys, Phil Klass, Damon Knight -- all started to move out and go their own ways. So Gold's little world was weakening even before he left.

SFR: A lot of people who were writing in the 1950s say that during that period, for various social and political reasons, science fiction was the most free area of American writing, especially for social satire. Two questions: Is this true, and if so, is it possible that the drop-off in your output was caused by the changing scene, the 1960s not being the same as the 1950s?

SHECKLEY: For me at that time, science fiction was a superb medium for satire and social commentary, although I did not especially think of it that way while I was writing a story. I didn't think, "Well, now, I will write a social commentary on this or that". Still, it was in the air. It's possible that my writing during that period was a response to the overall scene, but I think it is a fallacy to assume that a writer's output ought to stay at some sort of a constant pitch for his working life. I don't think writing works like that. Maybe in the early years I had a higher output than was really natural for me.

SFR: Many writers have said that the latter part of the 50s was just a very dull, restrictive period, with a constantly shrinking market. As Silverberg once put it, you woke up one morning and there was no field.

SHECKLEY: Yes, suddenly, one day, or one week, or one year, there was no field. There were no people. There was no scene, no fun. Now, how much of that was one's own personal problem -- that's a factor that you can't really calculate. But I would certainly agree with Bob. Those felt like rather grey days. You could still sell science fiction.

There were markets for it. They were paying about as well. But some sort of excitement was gone. It just wasn't fun anymore.

SFR: How does one create the excitement again? Can an editor do it?

SHECKLEY: Editors can certainly help. Our scene then, the New York science fiction life, was very social. We had the Hydra Club. We would meet every six weeks or so. We all scoffed at it and said that it was a bore, but we all showed up. There was Gold's weekly poker game. There were more writers in the New York area then. But then a lot of writers moved out. At first as far out as Red Bank and Milford, and then further out. There was no nucleus left. There's more now than there's been in years, but still very little.

SFR: Is this social scene important in respect to what is written, or can a writer do just as well living in the wilds of Idaho?

SHECKLEY: We got off a lot on playing around with story ideas. Back then we actually read each other's stuff. We would often have sort of informal plotting sessions. People sometimes helped me. Sometimes I helped others. It seems to me that we talked more about story in those days. In these days we talk mostly about markets, who pays what.

SFR: If you got a crowd of your OMNI contributors together and started talking story, do you think you could generate material in this way?

SHECKLEY: I don't know. We don't have any real writing crowd yet. There are people we've bought several times, but they aren't a crowd. Some of them I don't even know. Times have changed. The field has changed. The world has changed. It is a greyer world, a less hopeful world.

SFR: This brings us back to the times generating the fiction. It seems to me that the field was a lot livelier back in the late 1960s, with many writers trying to expand the field in a lot of ways, and that was a time of great social ferment. Now it seems the world is drab and so is the fiction.

SHECKLEY: What I don't see very much of anymore is good light stories. In the 50s and 60s there were lots of them. Most of what I see is stories which are fairly grim and depict a fairly grim future.

SFR: What do you make of the occasional bursts of science fiction getting very self-consciously literary such as we saw in the late 60s? Is this constructive?

SHECKLEY: I myself was not any part of it, but I think it was certainly useful. I would enjoy seeing it more, even though a lot of it was just plain self-consciously arty. It was probably a necessary corrective to some of science fiction's aggressively pulp roots. If you can have an aggressive root.

SFR: I don't know to whom the credit belongs, but somebody once commented that the major sins of science fiction are incest and cannibalism. Without some kind of aggressive renewal, the field can get aggressively ingrown after a while.

SHECKLEY: Yes, it can. I've got a feeling that 50s and 60s SF modeled itself to some extent on the pulps, and presented a lot of pulp story variations. The pulps are gone now, and the new writers have perhaps only read stories very loosely based upon pulp form, so maybe science fiction is searching for a form now. I'm speaking exclusively about short fiction here.

SFR: I think what we saw a lot of in the 60s was the attempt to use



SFR: There was a lot of talk at the time about experimental writing in science fiction. What does the concept of experimental writing mean to you?

SHECKLEY: To be glib, I could say that experimental writing is writing which has failed. You shouldn't experiment; you should do. In a way I don't know what experimental writing means. I know that for me as a writer, the mere fact that I have a story which does not work as a story, but still has something strange about it, something eerie -- I would probably call that experimental writing.

SFR: It sounds to me like a story that's only half there. It's not an innovation. You could still have the something eerie and the story too.

SHECKLEY: There it is. If you have a story, you don't have an experimental story. The implicit experiment in most experimental fiction is usually how we can have a story without actually having to sit down and tell a story.

SFR: Or is it how we can tell a story differently?

SHECKLEY: I don't think so. It's how to avoid that whole thing of having a character or characters with problems which they must solve. They try this; they try that, and they can't solve it, and then through some ingenious means, they solve it. This simple-minded format is the basis of the short story still.

SFR: Then in what way would such experimental fiction be desirable?

SHECKLEY: Some of the South American writers are doing very interesting work. I guess you could call it experimental fiction. They work with voice a great deal. A writer like Gabriel Marquez, the author of *AUTUMN OF THE PATRIARCH*, who to me sometimes feels like a science fiction writer, is finding new ways of weaving various voices into a single sentence strand. I find that fascinating. *AUTUMN OF THE PATRIARCH* is a book that most people do not like. I personally think it is a fascinating and successful book, but it won't ever be a terribly popular book. Experimental almost by definition seems to mean difficult.

SFR: Would you ever publish experimental science fiction in *OMNI*?

SHECKLEY: Yes, certainly. A story finally is not a plot and not a formula. It's a total effect which is

achieved in three thousand, four thousand words. I would love to find experimental work, but work which could still give our readers something. There are "mainstream" science fiction and fantasy stories out which if I had been offered them, I would have bought. There are things by Donald Barthelme which would work for us, and Julio Cortazar, Italo Calvino, to name just a few. I would love to present some work of that sort.

SFR: Surely all these writers do offer something to the reader, and that is why people read them. You talk about "offering something to the reader" and being experimental as if there's a definite dichotomy.

SHECKLEY: "Experimental" is a bad word here. We should define what we mean. Experimental has become one of those words which is used for any sort of non-regular story.

SFR: I think that in the 1960s the term "experimental" got used in science fiction to the point that it became meaningless.

SHECKLEY: Yes, I think so. It's a very loose term.

SFR: Are you doing any writing now?

SHECKLEY: I'm doing a science fiction novel which is under contract to Holt. I don't want to say a whole lot about it. I think it'll be funny. Beyond that I can't say. I have a great horror of speaking about works that are actually in progress.

SFR: Because you'll lose it by talking about it?

SHECKLEY: I will lose something of it.

SFR: Has your productivity bounced back from the dry periods?

SHECKLEY: It's bounced back some. I'm still a very long way from having a high output, but I've certainly written more this year than in the past several. I've got about half a novel done and I've written about three short stories also.

SFR: How has working at *OMNI* affected either your output or the kind of story you write?

SHECKLEY: As far as output goes, I think it's been a help. I like being relieved of some of the economic pressure that goes with being a pure freelancer, and I think that I'm probably going to write more.

SFR: Thank you, Mr. Sheckley.



the forms of little literary magazine fiction or NEW YORKER fiction. Is this going to get anywhere?

SHECKLEY: I don't think so. What that sort of thing has in its favor is a higher, more self-conscious writing level, but I personally like science fiction as a popular form. I don't particularly like anti-popular forms. When I read a story, I'd like to find a story there, rather than a stylistic meditation upon some theme, which is what a lot of the NEW YORKER stuff is. Science fiction also cannot really copy the style of the literary story. That sort of style depends upon very careful detailing of things. It builds its power from certain social details. But in science fiction, you can't really know that kind of detail about the future.

AND THEN I READ....



BY THE EDITOR

NEW TALES OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS
Edited by Ramsey Campbell
Arkham House, \$11.95

Contents:

- "Crouch End" by Stephen King.
- "The Star Pools" by A.A. Attanasio.
- "The Second Wish" by Brian Lumley.
- "Dark Awakening" by Frank Belknap Long.
- "Shaft Number 247" by Basil Cooper.
- "Black Man with a Horn" by T.E.D. Klein.
- "The Black Tome of Alsophocus" by H.P. Lovecraft and Martin S. Warnes.
- "Than Curse the Darkness" by David Drake
- "The Faces At Pine Dunes" by Ramsey Campbell.

After finishing this original anthology you'll have a well-rounded perspective of who and what Cthulhu and his minions are, and of the horrible danger facing humankind. They are lurking.

I was most impressed with David Drake's strong, unflinching narrative. He managed to scare me.

DEAD & BURIED

By Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
Warner 91-268, \$2.50

A very, very good walking-dead horror novelization of the movie, which will be released in early summer, 1981. This novel was first printed in August of 1980.

A familiar story: a small town sheriff is investigating a series of strange murders---people doused with gasoline and lit---when evidence of revived corpses emerges...

The local coroner/undertaker appears to be linked...as well as the sheriff's own wife! Then others...

The novel is gripping and coherent, detailed and rational, plausible and chillingly believable---until the last chapter. The final

confrontation between the undertaker and the sheriff raises too many "Hey, wait a minute!" objections and questions for the novel to survive. But that's not Yarbro's fault---she was chained to the screenplay written by Ronald Shusett and Dan O'Bannon which in turn was based on an original story by Jeff Miller and Alex Stem. The final scene has a good revelation/twist which all veteran SF readers are familiar with.

In the movie I'm sure it'll be more effective than in the novel, and will wow audiences; a movie keeps moving, and the fast, climactic pace to the end won't allow time for thinking through plot/logic/scientific flaws.

I haven't seen the movie, and I'm looking forward to seeing it: Jack Albertson as the benevolent, evil, insane black magic undertaker should be marvelous. James Farentino plays the sheriff, and Melody Anderson plays his wife.

SCANNERS

By Leon Whitson
Tower 51675, \$2.25

Another novelization of a film, this one badly done. The story is about a few high-psi-powered "scanners" created by a scientist, the paranoid drive of one of these to rule the world, and the struggle against him by two "good" scanners. Also involved is a rapacious super-corporation and its ruthless head of security.

There are plot holes and absurdities created by David Cronenberg's original screenplay that Whitson could not avoid.

But Whitson himself is inclined to eye metaphors galore. As:

'His eyes were utterly inward. They hadn't looked outward in a long time. They were dead black rubber balls in a thicket of reddish beard.'

'The artist was dying. His eyes were lifeless planets.'

'His silver eyes were bullet tips.'

'Revok's eyes were chips of black glass....'

Whitson inclines to purple prose and short sentences.

There are a lot of b/w photos from the film in the novel.

SPECTROS #1---SILVERADO
By Logan Winters
Tower 51612, \$1.75

An attempted melding of sorcery with westerns. Spectros is an old magician who has been chasing for generations a magician/sorcerer named Blackcluster. Blackcluster decades before had stolen Spectros' bride-to-be, and since has kept her in a trance/spell in a crystal coffin. They are all now in the wild west of America.

Spectros has three aides/companions. Blackcluster has only a single evil cohort.

In personal battle with Blackcluster, Spectros changes himself into his youthful prime: Kid Soledad, riding his giant black stallion Khamsin.

There is involvement with Indians, locals, a silver mine...and not much sorcery.

Of course Blackcluster escapes with Kirstina-in-the-coffin, and Spectros, a little older, tired, must train again...

So far there are four Spectros books: SILVERADO

2---HUNT THE BEAST DOWN

3---NATCHEZ

4---THE SILVER GALLEON

These are formula, action, simplistic.

THE CLAW OF THE CONCILIATOR

By Gene Wolfe
Timescape Books, \$12.95

This second of four volumes in The Book of the New Sun continues the adventures/descent of Severian, the exiled Torturer. The time is at least a million years from now, the society and culture are melds of past technological glory and common medievalism...a period of ghastly powers and degeneracy, of hope and swirling, hidden energies, movements and terrors.

As a lifelong reader of science fiction I accept and incorporate with ease the wonders, the bizarre customs, the laws of this far, far future Earth. But I can't help imagining the blond minds, the expanded consciousness of those who have not been acclimated to thinking in other categories---in other worlds ---and who stumble into the first volume, THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER, or this volume...and either run from it as from the Devil, or feel that marvelous thrill I felt at age 10.

Even now, this series---this fine writer---evokes that feeling in me. What it must do to a stranger to SF boggles my mind.

Gene Wolfe writes with such skill and art, with such precision and effect, such detail and care and control, that as a fiction writer I am

simply humbled and awed.

I can only urge anyone who has not begun to read this Book to run to a sf/fantasy bookstore and buy a copy; THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER is now available in paperback from Pocketbooks at \$2.50.

I have deliberately not revealed any of the story of CLAW. To give anything away, in this case, would be a disservice to the reader.

ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK

By Mike McQuay
Bantam 14914-8, \$2.50

This novelization of a soon-to-be-released movie (R) is taut, action-filled, fairly believable.

The President is crash-landed in New York---in 1997 an island prison for all malcontents, criminals and crazies in the country after a limited war with the Soviets---and a crime hero, ex-Air Force pilot, Snake Plissken is promised full pardon if he can go in alone and get the man out alive---with a super secret tape cassette vital to world peace.

Manhattan is a literal concrete jungle with residual nerve gas in the air (from the war) and from the anarchy inherent in the inmate-run conditions of the vast prison.

Men have become creatures in the sewers and subways, and only the Duke of New York and his coterie and "army" survive in some luxury.

In addition to his rescue problems, Snake has a deadline---and a motive---for rescue of the President: implanted in his body are tiny bombs. Only the government scientists who placed them can neutralize them.

During his desperate attempts to survive and find and rescue the President, Snake is injured in various ways. Yet, in true Hero style he is capable of truly extraordinary physical feats despite his wounds.

Mike McQuay writes effective, tensioned action-adventure fiction. The novel makes you want to see the movie.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

By J.R.R. Tolkien
Houghton Mifflin, \$50 boxed set.

A handsome black box, three volumes, each bound in silver leather-like material, each volume imprinted on the cover with a large crimson JRRT symbol, with alien letters below spelling...what?

This is the Silver Anniversary Edition, for those who want the very best.

Vol.1---The Fellowship of the Ring.

Vol.2---The Two Towers

Vol.3---The Return of the King
plus Appendixes A-F,
plus Index for all three volumes.

Each volume has a large, fold-out map of the lands covered in that volume. Forward and Prologue by the author in Volume 1. Synopses by the author in Vol.2-3.

These are printed on high quality book paper. These books will last longer than you will.

THE ROBOT IN THE CLOSET

By Ron Goulart
DAW U1626, \$1.95

A smart-ass robot time machine who poses as human is the key, amusing element in this typical Goulart goulash of satire and derring-do as a young couple Trip to 1906 San Francisco and 1814 England in the tracing of a fortune in gold. They are opposed by a greedy, conscienceless relative and appalled by some disreputable ancestors. And then the robot time machine goes on the frtiz.

Life for a Goulart character is fraught with villains and bad timing.

GOD EMPEROR OF DUNE

By Frank Herbert
Putnam, \$12.95

The fourth of the Dune books, this one seems to be the last---as 3500 year-old Leto, kept alive and keen-minded by the spice drug melange, slowly metamorphosing into a Worm---puts in place his final moves for irreversible transformation of mankind into a far, far better creature than we.

Fascinating social, political, psychological, economic commentaries on human societies and cultures---and the ever-changing, never-changing nature of mankind.

This is high on the best-seller lists. Deservedly. It may be flawed as pure novel, but one tastes Wisdom in it, and Herbert is a marvelously skilled, tantalizing writer.

OF COURSE THE COUNTRY
IS QUILTY OF TERRIBLE
BEHAVIOR! IF IT ISN'T
THEN I AM!



UNSILENT NIGHT

By Tanith Lee
NESFA Press \$10. + \$1 postage
Box G, MIT Branch Post Office
Cambridge, MA 02139

I hope it's a compliment to say that when she writes of magic and evil sorcerers, of invincible heroes and flawed courtesans, Tanith Lee is better than Robert E. Howard. Her fiction is so sensuous, muscular, disciplined and taut that it is a pleasure to read her.

This small book, hardbound, printed on acid-free paper, 84 pages, in a limited, numbered edition of 1000 copies, contains two stories and ten poems.

The stories, "Sirriammis," and "Cyron in Wax" are familiar: the strange slave girl who worships a distant, evil goddess and who practices shape-changing and who makes a noble youth her victim. Her death is ironic. The story of Sirriammis is told by an old slave in ancient Greek times.

"Cyron in Wax" tells how a superior, highly intelligent young man outwits and kills a seemingly all-powerful, evil sorcerer.

Tanith Lee was Guest of Honor at Boskone XVIII (the annual New England Science Fiction Association convention) and this book is NESFA's customary and honorary volume commemorating that event.

I have a feeling UNSILENT NIGHT would be a good acquisition: I think Tanith Lee will endure as a writer far beyond her time.

SMALL WORLD

By Tabitha King
Macmillan, \$10.95

We are introduced to two repellent characters---Roger Tinker, an amoral cipher of a scientist who has invented an incredible device which shrinks anything enclosed in its aimed beam---and Dorothy Douglas, daughter of an ex-President, spoiled, solipsist, vicious, hating, who takes Roger, civilizes him to her needs, and uses him and his device to furnish her world-famous doll house (of the White House) with miniaturized, perfect furniture, paintings, rugs...even a living, breathing inhabitant---a young woman a Dolly has hated.

Tabitha King (Stephen King's wife) writes well, but dwells too long on preliminaries and secondary characters.

The last half of the novel is exciting and suspenseful, and evil is fated for retribution. The trouble is Roger and Dolly are such turn-offs reading of their doings and thoughts is a drag...and so is the novel.

THE ORYCON 80 CONVENTION FOUR-WAY TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

ARTHUR C. CLARKE

HARLAN ELLISON

FRITZ LEIBER

MARK WELLS

November 14, 1980, 9:30 PM

WELLS: Everybody hear me?

ELLISON: Well, I hear you. I don't know if they do out there. How the hell are you, Arthur?

CLARKE: I'm fine. I've just done a picture story for Intel; in fact, curiously enough, because they're doing an audio-visual presentation in connection with a launching of Intelsat 5 the new communications satellite. And the photographer has just left, and I've just recorded the story of how it just happened. So it's rather curious we're now talking through courtesy of Intelsat between Sri Lanka and Oregon.

ELLISON: Well, I'd totally forgotten we were supposed to have this conversation. I've been at the Jet Propulsion Lab for the last two or three days watching the Saturn Fly-by.

CLARKE: I envy you because I've only heard verbal reports over the radio of what's happened. And what's this weird business about the braided rings?

ELLISON: That's absolutely true. The F ring has three interwoven strings of matter. They do in fact wind around each other and there are in fact nodes on them which may either be embedded satellites, little moons or may just be knots in the braids. It totally defies all celestial mechanics according to everybody who's looked at it. And I must say they're totally bewildered out at JPL.

CLARKE: Good. Well . . . I mean you realize what this is don't you?

ELLISON: No, I don't. You tell me.

CLARKE: Cosmic Engineering.

ELLISON: All I could think of when I saw those photographs was that if we could get a contingent of Alabama rednecks who really believe all of this fundamentalist religion nonsense, and bring them out there and show them this they would understand that God was too busy making aesthetics to worry about keeping the universe together.

CLARKE: I prefer which. I hope that Carl Sagan's program, of course we won't see it, but I mean his remarks on evolution about being a fact not a theory, may hopefully do something to improve the intellectual climate of the country.

ELLISON: Well, Arthur, to be perfectly candid I don't think anything much is going to improve the intellectual climate of this country. . . . into Juke and Kallikak land, but Carl's program may just slow it just a trifle. It's very popular here, and people are in fact getting

together to watch it evenings, which is very promising.

CLARKE: Well, fine. I've got the first six programs . . . the first four programs, and I've thoroughly enjoyed them and I'm looking forward very much to see the remaining ones. Incidentally, my own series is on the air now in the U.K. Arthur Clarke's Mysterious World, and that's doing very well indeed at 13 one-half-hour programs.

ELLISON: I think we're eventually going to get it over here on the educational channel.

CLARKE: I sincerely hope so. I don't know what the position is at the moment; the book is apparently out in the states and it's doing very well indeed.

ELLISON: You know, it's peculiar that Sri Lanka is one of the few countries that has no TV at all.

CLARKE: Well, that's not true. We have had TV now for a couple of years. It's rather limited to the Colombo area, but in fact there are about one hundred thousand sets in the country, which isn't bad for a total population of only about 15 million.

ELLISON: Gee, that's very strange. I was planning to move in down the road from you a little bit because I understood they had no TV at all.

CLARKE: I'm sorry, but in Colombo, and everywhere in fact, they're building a TV center just down the road from me.

ELLISON: Well, all right. So how are you doing otherwise; how are you feeling?



CLARKE: Well, I'm fine. I . . . ah . . . as you know I've stopped writing. I finished writing in '77 with FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE and I literally have written nothing since and have no intention of doing so, except the odd articles and lectures. Incidentally, I've just done the preface to the Nebula Awards which I sent off about a week ago for the next volume.

ELLISON: I'm in that book, aren't I?

CLARKE: Yeah, that's right. And incidentally, now I have no time to read science fiction because it's a full time job reading about science fiction.

ELLISON: It's a filthy . . .

CLARKE: I did make an exception. I still get MAKERS OF FANTASY. I thoroughly enjoyed that story in which you get devoured by a giant snake.

ELLISON: Oh, my . . . thanks a lot, Arthur.

CLARKE: I heard the audience reaction then, so presumably everyone could hear me okay.

ELLISON: Yes. As usual, I'm much beloved of my audience. It's what one gets when one spends 25 years dealing with pinheads.

CLARKE: That's right. I just had a cable from Scotland a few minutes ago. And Pocket Book's on our case at the moment. Presumably the matter is subjudicated, but there's no reason why I shouldn't mention it. They reissued my first volume of essays, THE SANDS OF THE SPACESHIP, saying that this had been completely revised; in fact, it's completely unrevised. I would only reissue it on condition that it was not revised. And right across the cover it says completely revised edition, so heads will roll.

ELLISON: Good, do it for me too. I'm about to sue Harper & Row. It's much handier this way.

CLARKE: Of course, poor Harper & Row are my publishers too, and I'm sorry you're having a little row with them.

ELLISON: Well, no it's not really their fault, it's just terminal stupidity. You see, my contracts say that they cannot call my books science fiction and that they cannot put any science fiction ads in the books in the hardcover, or in any of the licensed paperback editions. And they unfortunately didn't bother to carry over those clauses into

their deal with Dell on the paperback, and Dell has just reissued DEATHBIRD STORIES, and the book of it is all full of science fiction ads and so I called Harper and Row and said, "Now you've breached contract, and probably Dell, too. And you've lost the book," and all like that. And they said, "Oh, gee, we will have to check it out." And I got a call from Buzz Wyatt today and he said, "No, in fact, it's our error; we just didn't bother to check the contract when we made the supplementary contract with Dell." And I said, "They're not in fault; it's you, and you've lost the book, and that means that Dell's lost it too . . ."

CLARKE: Well, this conversation is typical of the deep intellectual and aesthetic thoughts involved when two authors start conversations together.

ELLISON: Absolutely. Absolutely. I know nothing about writing; all I know is this.

CLARKE: Well, who of my friends are present at the conference?

ELLISON: At the convention, you mean?

CLARKE: At the convention now. Anyone else I know there I can send greetings to?

WELLS: Well, I . . .

CLARKE: Good old friends around there.

WELLS: The Guest of Honor at our convention is Fritz Leiber. Some of the other notables . . .

CLARKE: Well, Hi, Fritz, how nice . . . quite a while since we've met. In fact . . . of course, it's more than three years since I've met anybody except Bob Heinlein who was here earlier in the year.

LEIBER: Hello, Arthur.

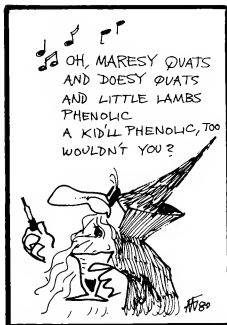
CLARKE: . . . just now, how are you?

LEIBER: Oh, very well there. They are indulging me in every way at this convention and now, now with talking around the world.

ELLISON: How are you, Fritz?

LEIBER: I'm fine. Getting along very well.

CLARKE: Fine, fine, fine. Fritz sounds as if he's rather well oiled.



LEIBER: Well, I'll try to . . . I think that's just a certain amount of hesitation or lack of training, but ah, but Harlan is my great champion, you know.

CLARKE: I don't think you need a champion.

LEIBER: Well, Harlan got me to move to a better apartment about three years ago, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you, Harlan.

ELLISON: Ah . . .

LEIBER: I needed that push; I was beginning to believe, I was beginning to believe the stories about how bad off I was.

ELLISON: Well, listen, anything that'll get you to do more stories, I know, I mean where else . . .

LEIBER: Thank you, that's the thing I most wanted to hear you say.

ELLISON: I've never had an original idea, Fritz. I have stolen everything from you.

LEIBER: Oh, well, I've stolen them back.

ELLISON: And done them much better, I'm afraid. How long has it been since you two have seen each other?

CLARKE: Well, it must be five years, isn't it?

LEIBER: Oh, it must be at least, I have memories, I think, maybe I've seen you since then, but I have memories of walking in New York with you and . . .

CLARKE: ... memory too, but that must be 10 or 15 years ago.

LEIBER: Yes, that was when Kubrick was going to do a film about Napoleon.

CLARKE: Whatever became of that?

ELLISON: I think he wound

LEIBER: You tell me.

CLARKE: I've just written Stanley. Have you all seen THE SHINING?

LEIBER: Yes.

ELLISON: Yes, I have.

CLARKE: Did you like it?

LEIBER: No.

ELLISON: I'm afraid I did, I rather liked it.

CLARKE: I'm sorry. Well, I've seen THE SHINING, in fact, he put it on for me when I was in London the other day, and also I strongly recommend, well, you know the little girl in 2001 who received the phone call from her daddy in the space station asked him to buy her a bush baby, you remember her?

LEIBER: Yes.

CLARKE: Anyway, Daddy bought her a movie camera instead, and her first film has just been on British TV and it's THE MAKING OF THE SHINING.

ELLISON: Was it his daughter, Kubrick's daughter?

CLARKE: Yes, that is Vivian. That is Vivian. That is her first film, and it's been on TV, and it shows the making of the film. It's a very nice little documentary. THE MAKING OF THE SHINING, try to get hold of it.

LEIBER: That's charming. Well, you know, my son has followed me now into the science fiction writing, and I'm extremely proud about that. We are a father-and-son science fiction novelist pair.

ELLISON: You know what's interesting?

CLARKE: The combinations of that kind I can't think of many off-hand.

ELLISON: Ah, Fritz. I was going to say something interesting has been happening. Bob Silverberg is starting to write again, and after doing LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE I got him involved in doing a story for this new TWILIGHT ZONE magazine. And Bob had never really done any fantasy or

very much of it and he'd always kind of poo-pooed it as being the lesser of the two forms.

LEIBER: Yeah.

ELLISON: Science fiction was the true word and I got a call from him today just filled with wonder and astonishment at how much he finds pouring out of him in terms of fantasy. He's done three stories in the last two weeks because he . . .

CLARKE: Wasn't he a fantasist?

ELLISON: Well, yeah, he says he never realized there was that kind of wonderfulness. That he always thought it was science fiction where the true word came from, but now he finds that he likes writing fantasy even better.

CLARKE: Excellent.

ELLISON: It's been a long time since you've done a fantasy, Arthur.

LEIBER: Yes.

CLARKE: Well, I've never done any real fantasy unless you say things such as THE NINE BILLION NAMES OF GOD and things were fantasies.

ELLISON: I was thinking of that, and a couple of others that you did that were pretty well into that kind of feeling. It would be interesting for you to bring your particular sensibility to a fantasy idea. You don't think there's one more story?

CLARKE: I just got back from a fascinating voyage. I was two weeks at sea on the University of Colorado floating campus, S.S. Universe. I joined them in Djakarta and we steamed past Krakatoa which is still smoldering gently so that's one thing I guess not many people have done.

LEIBER: Well, here in Oregon, of course, I'm near the new volcanic territory in the United States.

CLARKE: Right. You've been doing pretty well in that department yourself.

ELLISON: There's another new one, isn't there, that's just opened up someplace up in Alaska?

LEIBER: Cold Bay, Alaska, someone says here.

ELLISON: There's another one up there someplace. It's very interesting what's happening; the earth is burping a lot lately. Well, listen, how are things in Sri Lanka -- they nice and quiet down there?

CLARKE: Yes, that's the word. Nothing much happens here, except the monsoons. I sit here quietly in my house; apart from occasional trips, there's no plans ever to leave again. Though I suspect something will come up. There's this cruise on the . . . oh, what . . . my day is punctuated by mail. The boy has just brought in a pile of letters six feet high. Let's see if it's anyone of you in here. Excuse me one second, air mail. That's for Rohan, New American Library send to me. I'll just look to see if there's any bills, writs. Oh, here's a letter just arrived from one Sam Butler from Oregon. We'll open that letter and see what he has to say to me.

LEIBER: Yes.

CLARKE: Well, he's telling me that the phone call that I thought was tomorrow was actually going to be today. You know, it's damn lucky. I might have gone out this morning so you definitely got me down. Oh, let me read this letter. It's just been delivered to me by hand. Dear Arthur: Latest word has it that Harlan Ellison will be on the other end of the line. Just got a letter from him yesterday, and he expressed an interest in talking with you on Friday. Actually, he was under the impression that it was Saturday, but when I talked with him, and he found it was Friday, he said, for Arthur, okay, or something like that.

ELLISON: That's exactly what I said. I'll be home on Friday night . . .

CLARKE: Sam Butler, how about that?

ELLISON: It's 9:49 at night here, Arthur.

CLARKE: But what's the day? I know that, the problem's not the time, but the day.

ELLISON: Oh, the day is Wednesday.

CLARKE: You've got me thoroughly confused.

LEIBER: The day is Friday.

CLARKE: The date line not just one.

ELLISON: No, I'm just playing a game with you -- I'm just funning around.



CLARKE: I know you are. You know I wrote a story about the dateline called "Time On Mars" many years ago. In this particular story about the fact that the international dateline on Mars occurs on land, no seas to put it in. So there'd be awful confusion in some town where the dateline runs down the main street.

ELLISON: You know, out at JPL, while I was there for the Saturn business, one of the things which pleased me was one of my moments to gloat. I keep being pilloried because I don't write science fiction and I don't understand a lot of the heavy science that does go into science fiction, but I was gloating because I'm the only one of you guys who doesn't have to rewrite all his stories to fall in line with what they're discovering now. I have nothing to be ashamed of.

CLARKE: That's a point in fact. I'm a little bit worried about Titan which is the . . . of my penultimate novel here on Earth. And, of course, things have changed a bit around Titan the last few days.

ELLISON: They discovered now that the atmosphere is not in fact methane, it's nitrogen, and they figure that there's a liquid nitrogen sea down there.

CLARKE: There's still lots of hydrocarbons there, I'm sure, in various places, so I'll stick to that for a while.

ELLISON: The person I really feel sorry for, somebody did a novel that was placed on Janus, as I recall, which no longer exists.

CLARKE: Yeah, but they found a lot of other ones, so they can just change the name.

ELLISON: Somehow JUDGMENT ON S-11 doesn't sound like such a terrific title.

CLARKE: Let's leave a nice name for it. I'm also interested in, of course, Japetus, because in the novel version of 2001, that's where I put my monolith. I don't know if they're going to get any pictures of that, but won't it be exciting if they do?

ELLISON: There are pictures . . .

CLARKE: Japetus is quite a mystery why the two halves have such different albedos.

ELLISON: They do in fact have pictures of Japetus. In fact, I've got them; unfortunately they're upstairs, or I would run up and get

them for you and tell you what they show. They don't show a whole hell of a lot, but they look like, it looks like a pretty old ice body.

CLARKE: Obviously, the . . . reflective power of the two hemispheres is grossly different, that's the mystery.

ELLISON: Well, they're discovering all sorts of incredible things. There are eccentric rings in the, I think it's the A or B rings, something like that -- they're finding eccentric rings. They're finding very little, I guess, what they're calling sheppdog satellites that are floating around in between the rings kind of keeping them together. It's incredibly interesting. It's a very complex system as we suspected, but instead of five rings, it's something like 98 or 125 at last count.

CLARKE: Well, I should hope they won't be able to explain, then. In that case, they'll have a very interesting situation.

WELLS: This is OryCon again, and we have a question. I have a question, I must say, since I'm the one on the phone, that I would like to ask both of you, and perhaps get your thoughts. A number of years ago, in a story, and it embarrasses me to admit it, but I don't remember the exact story, Mr. Clarke postulated the existence of a communications network designed around satellites which orbited around a planet. That has obviously now come to pass. Would you care to speculate perhaps on what will happen in the next 20 to 30 years?

ELLISON: You first, Arthur.

CLARKE: The story, of course, was for a technical paper in 1945. In fact, that's just what I've been filming and taping for Intelsat this morning because they're launching a new communications satellite, Intelsat 5 shortly, and in fact, they're rather flattered by the fact that more and more people are calling the synchronous orbits the Clarke Orbit now after my original concept, even though I didn't actually first suggest synchronous orbits as such, that was an old idea. I merely suggested they use . . . that would be the place to put satellites. When I wrote my 1945 paper, I didn't expect this to happen in my lifetime, and that I sort of said ruefully, I'd have tried to patent it so that wouldn't have done me much good because I think the patent would have expired the year the first commercial comsat went up. Now, if I had any really bright ideas of what would

happen in the next 20 years I think I'd keep quiet about them and go pick up a patent application.

ELLISON: Here we are back to business again.

CLARKE: I'm afraid so. No, I think the biggest thing in the next 20 years is going to be the development of microelectronics of chips of information services, of pocket computers -- all this revolution is just starting.

ELLISON: Well, is it my turn?

CLARKE: I did a piece, if I can continue. I did a piece about this called "Silicon Scholars" which OMNI published recently. Okay.

ELLISON: Well, the thing that I'm not sure, whether this is going to be a future development, but it's in the works right now and it's happening and it alarms the hell out of me. The Christian Television Network has their own satellite up there and it is broadcasting fundamentalist nonsense 24 hours a day, and if one goes to places like Alabama and South and North Carolina where I occasionally do some work for the Equal Rights Amendment -- you know, I go down there and do these lectures -- and late at night I turn on the television or the radio to see what's going on, and all that's being broadcast is Jerry Falwell, and Ernest Angely and the rest of those lunatics in their ice cream suits asking for money so that they can bring back the time of the Bible, and they have got something like, oh, I don't know, 20 million followers and they now say that one out of every five Americans is a born-again. And that alarms the hell out of me, and they are using television and they're using these communications satellites and that communication satellite network to promote stupidity, institutionalized stupidity. And I think that will have a more profound effect on the quality of life in this country over the next 20-25 years of anything I can think of.

CLARKE: Yeah, well, that's a depressing thought. It is ironic that the techniques of modern science can be used to spread superstition, but on the other hand, if one tries, then the whole argument of censorship is also involved, which again incidentally, I wrote a story about in PLAYBOY many years ago. "I Remember Babylon", which was about the idea of communication satellites being used to broadcast pornography. In fact what you've got is fundamentalist pornography; in fact, that's a good theory. I've already got seven pages. That sort of thing is pornography. All this fundamentalist rubbish.

ELLISON: Yeah, I'll tell you if I had a couple of million dollars what I would do with it would be to go to one of the networks and say, okay, under the equal time fairness doctrine, you have to give equal time to opposed viewpoints. And I'd say every Sunday is nothing but Bible-thumping hour from 6:00 in the morning until you want to puke. And I said I would give them, I would buy a million dollars worth of TV time to put on the hour of atheism.

CLARKE: Very good idea. Why don't you get it on the air? I'll back you up.

ELLISON: Well, thankee, thankee, can we have an amen, Brother Arthur How's the convention?

CLARKE: Back to Carl Sagan, he's making the point on his program on the evolution, and no, that was a beautiful sequence showing how life had evolved from earlier simple forms, and it was really poetic. And it seems to me so much more beautiful and so much more religious, religious a concept, the idea of evolving life forms, whereas this special-creation nonsense, I mean, is just aesthetically ugly.

ELLISON: They don't really want to know. I mean most of those people don't want to know; it's much easier to turn their lives over to dope or religion which are one and the same thing, I suspect. It's depressing.

CLARKE: Whoever said opium is the religion of the masses? I'm sure it's not original.

ELLISON: What's going on at the convention?

WELLS: Well, right now, we're listening to a fascinating conversation. This really is one of the high points.

ELLISON: Well, if I went to conventions, I would have gone to the Ory-Con because I was just up in Oregon doing a thing for John Anderson.

CLARKE: I couldn't hear the last word before you were interrupted by a shriek.

ELLISON: Well, what I was saying, Arthur, was that I was just up in Oregon, up in Eugene, Oregon, doing a lecture on behalf of John Anderson's campaign, not that it did much good. As Jefferson said, "The people get pretty much the kind of government they deserve" and it's probably time for this country to get Ronald Reagan, and ahem, but . . .

CLARKE: Well, you know, I hate to

say this, but I've got a considerable respect for anyone who's done what Reagan's done.

ELLISON: Well, you're going to have to tell me what it is because I was here when he was Governor of this state, and I remember his response to the free speech movement up at the University of California, which was to call out the troops.

CLARKE: Well, anyway, you've got to make the best of what you can of it, through the next few years. You know, cooperate with the inevitable; in fact, that used to be my motto: "Cooperate with the inevitable", but I've changed that now to a more positive one: "Exploit the inevitable".

ELLISON: I was thinking of a variation on that in which one turns its own carnality against it. But I'm not sure that would work with you.

CLARKE: Eh?

ELLISON: I think he's past the age of sex.

CLARKE: Anyway, let's change the subject from the crusty one of politics which we can't do anything about now at least for four years, or perhaps in two years we can make some impact, I suppose, on the Administration.

ELLISON: Hey, Arthur, how would you like to do a story for THE LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS?

CLARKE: You mean THE LAST LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS?

ELLISON: Yes, Absolutely Final, Last, there's no more. It's going to be coming out

CLARKE: You know you reminded me of a story they told me at TIME/LIFE when Churchill was doing the history of the war for them. He would keep sending revision versions. Sort of penultimate versions, then for the final version, they sort of breathed a sigh of relief when the final version arrived, but then would come along another version labeled overtake.

ELLISON: Well, no, I'm getting ready for the final push. It's going to press. Berkeley/Putnam is doing it. They're taking a year to publish it in three volumes. And I, that's it then, that rock's off my back forever. It's your last chance, Arthur; I've only been asking you now for ten years.

CLARKE: No, it's been about six or seven years since I wrote a short

story. I can't really remember. And three years since I wrote a novel, and it's a lovely feeling. I have no withdrawal symptoms whatever.

ELLISON: I've often thought about getting out of it, and getting in an honest occupation myself, but it is the only craft I know. I used to . . . I'm too nervous to steal.

CLARKE: A lot of good books have been written in jail, you know. PILGRIM'S PROGRESS, for example.

ELLISON: Uh huh. I often tell the story about you that; do you remember?

CLARKE: Which one?

ELLISON: Well, it was the last time I think that we saw each other, which was when you came to New York to accept the Nebula for RENDEZVOUS FOR RAMA? And you had that accident.

CLARKE: "A Meeting With Medusa" won a Nebula.

ELLISON: Right, and you had that terrible accident off the Bahamas.

CLARKE: Yeah, um

ELLISON: I don't know if you remember this, but it's very much in the forefront of my thoughts when I think about you. We had been exchanging some correspondence about lecture bureaus, and when you came into the room at the Nebula Awards, of course, there were two guys from the hospital, I guess, who were, you know, supporting you because you had come right from what . . . which hospital was it? I don't know

CLARKE: I came straight from the Virgin Islands.

ELLISON: Well, wherever it was, they brought you in and you sat down in a chair and you accepted the award and you looked just terrible because you know, you had been very close to death, and then everybody went about their business. And after a little while one of these interns, or orderlies, or whatever he was, came . . . found me, I was over on the other side of the room. Everybody was kind of clustered around milling and thronging and he said, "Mr. Clarke would like to speak to you", and I said, "Fine". You know, I didn't want to bother you because I knew everybody would be hanging around and I knew you weren't feeling too well, so I had stayed away. And I came over and you said, "When I was, when I was going down," apparently you'd, I don't know quite what happened to you, but you'd gone the

wrong way swimming down to get up out of the water. You said you were worried about me not getting the proper lecture bureau. And you had made, you had given the word or sent a letter to your lecture bureau, and you wanted to let me know about it. And I was astonished that when you had such, something more important to worry about like your life, that you were concerned about getting me the good lecture bureau.

CLARKE: I don't recall that. Actually, what happened, I had vertigo; I was skin diving with some friends from the space business. I just, my gyros started tumbling, sort of spinning around in the water. If I hadn't dropped my weight belt I'd been drowned in a few more seconds. I haven't done any serious diving since that. Incidentally, the guy who spoke to you, he's a New Yorker, and his first book is coming out shortly, and it's going to be a sensation.

ELLISON: Oh, yeah?

CLARKE: His name is Peter Arthur, and I've written the prefix to his book which has 3 godfathers: Arthur Miller, Norman Mailer and myself. Peter's book is called: WITH BRENDON BEHAN, because Peter was Brendon's companion, bodyguard, and everything in his last years. And this book which I've been persuading Peter to write, he's finally done it, it's been sold by Scott to St. Martins Press. It's going to be out shortly, and it's going to, it's probably going to cause a war between Ireland and the United States amongst other minor details.

ELLISON: When's it coming out?

CLARKE: I don't know, but anyway, it's called WITH BRENDON BEHAN and the author is Peter Arthur, and he was one of the guys, and he met him at the Hotel Chelsea, that's how we got to know each other, and that's where Brendon used to stay. So I have made an exception to my rule. I wrote a book, through this book, I wrote a prefix to Peter's book. And it's out shortly.

ELLISON: It's nice to have somebody helping to push a book like that.

WELLS: Gentlemen, I hate to break in, but we do only have a few more . . .

ELLISON: Before we get cut off, Arthur, there is a . . . Bob Sheckley and I had a vicious idea of coming down to visit you in Sri Lanka sometime next year.

CLARKE: Well, you know Abbey is living a few miles from my bungalow here in Sri Lanka.

ELLISON: Yeah, I know that's why, Bob. I needed a little peace and quiet and Bob said, "Well, let's go down to Sri Lanka, and I said, 'You've got it.' Well do you think it will disturb you too much to have us down the road from you?"

CLARKE: No, I wish I could get there more often down to the bungalow, incidentally the first paying guest I had there was Tim Pienan. Poor chap.

ELLISON: He just died.

CLARKE: Yeah. He was looking for a place to get away from smog. So he tried Sri Lanka, and didn't like it and went to California instead.

ELLISON: Yes, that's where everybody goes.

CLARKE: Yeah.

ELLISON: Well, listen, it was wonderful talking to you, and I thank the OryCon Committee for giving me the opportunity to talk to you. It was very very kind of them. If there's anything else I can do for them I'm sure you guys will let me know.

CLARKE: It's wonderful speaking to you, Harlan, and I'm open house to anyone who gets to this part of the world. The science fiction writers I've had here: Sprague deCamp, Mack Reynolds, Bob and Ginny Heinlein and well, I expect to be here, I hope for the rest of my life, apart for very rare trips to England, and you know where to find me.

ELLISON: I think I'll be seeing you this coming year sometime, Arthur. Until that time, please stay well and stay happy.

CLARKE: Okay, and the same to you.

WELLS: Thank you, gentlemen, both very, very much.

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TEN YEARS AGO IN SF -- SUMMER, 1971 BY ROBERT SABELLA

On July 11, 1971, John W. Campbell died after serving thirty-four years as editor of ASTOUNDING/ANALOG. A guessing-game commenced as to whom Conde! Nast would name as his replacement, surely one of the toughest acts in science fiction. Frequently-mentioned names included Frederik Pohl, Lester del Rey and Harry Harrison. Little mention was made of the eventual selectee, Ben Bova.

August Derleth died on July 4 at the age of 62. He was the co-founder of Arkham House which published horror stories in the tradition of H.P. Lovecraft.

The Hugo Awards for 1971 were announced at Noreason: RINGWORLD by Larry Niven (Best Novel); "111 Met in Lankmar", by Fritz Leiber (Best Novella); "Slow Sculpture" by Theodore Sturgeon (Best Short Story); No Award (Best Dramatic Presentation); FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION (Best Magazine); Leo & Diane Dillon (Best Professional Artists); LOCUS (Best Fanzine); Alicia Austin (Best Fan Artist); and Richard Geis (Best Fan Writer).

By his later admission, George R.R. Martin was sitting in the gallery at the Noreason Awards Presentation, "lusting after an award". Noreason was the first Worldcon to have an estimated attendance of over 2000 people. Its efficiency set a model for future Worldcons to emulate.

(Thanks to LOCUS for several items)

THE ENGINES OF THE NIGHT

BY BARRY N. MALZBERG



Selected Essays From
THE ENGINES OF THE NIGHT: Science Fiction in the Eighties
To Be Published By DOUBLEDAY

PART THREE

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST

Well, what is it? Fifty experts -- as the old Yiddish saying might have it -- will produce fifty-one definitions. Nonetheless, we all have a try at it; here is mine from the COLLIER'S ENCYCLOPEDIA where after a five-year hold it finally was slipped in for the late Groff Conklin's essay early in 1980:

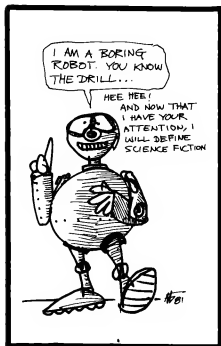
"Science fiction is that form of literature which deals with the effects of technological change in an imagined future, an alternative present or a reconceived past".

Not too bad, I suppose, but it does not get around what I would call the ARROWSMITH problem ... which is to say that Sinclair Lewis's novel which all of us science-fictioners would instinctually agree is not of the genre would probably fall into it by terms of this definition. Certainly technological (medical) change is an important aspect of this novel as are the effects of science upon the individual. Also, my definition would exclude many of the whimsical early short stories of Robert Sheckley's whose bemused characters face the absurdities of a slightly disorienting metaphysics in the present day; there is nothing technological about these stories, much less technological change and yet they appeared, most of them, in Horace Gold's GALAXY, fit indistinguishably into the format of that magazine and got Sheckley generally recognized by 1953 as the most promising of the new science fiction writers. My definition would also exclude Randall Garrett's long-running D'Arcy series (in ANALOG and ISAAC ASIMOV's magazines) in which in an alternate present magic has assumed the role of the conventional science which never got around to being discovered or applied. Change, to be sure, but technological change? Quite the opposite: this is fiction that deals with the absence of technology.

Try Sturgeon's nineteen-forties dictum: a good science fiction story is one whose events would not have occurred without its scientific content. This is promising -- among other things it manages to summarize in half a sentence the essence of John W. Campbell's editorial vision and what ASTOUNDING was trying in the decade ... but Anne McCaffrey's dragons would have nowhere to fly in Sturgeon's science fiction and Sheckley's work, almost all of it now right through his great 1968 novel, DIMENSION OF MIRACLES would not fit. Neither would the visions of J.G. Ballard and his imitators or

descendants; if THE TERMINAL BEACH is about anything it is about a world without science and yet it is as clearly a work of science fiction as any of its decade. Tiptree's famous THE WOMEN MEN DON'T SEE has no science in it either, nor does Robert Silverberg's 1972 novel DYING INSIDE, generally regarded as one of the pivotal works of the decade. (It is about a telepath who has lived concealing his gift slowly losing his powers in contemporary New York.) Then too, Sturgeon's definition would admit not only ARROWSMITH but all novels about science... Milton Thompson's NOT AS A STRANGER, Peter George's RED ALERT, George P. Elliott's David Knudsen and any definition so inclusive would obviously tend to break down a category which, however ill-defined, is very clearly understood by its readers, writers, editors and critics to be a distinct and limited (if not limiting) form of literature.

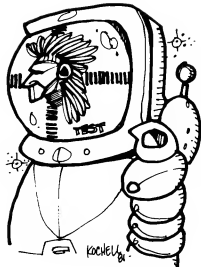
Perhaps one throws up one's hands, dives back to the fifties for Damon Knight's "Science fiction is whatever we point to when we say 'this is science fiction'". Lots of truth in that; the fact is that whatever trouble we may have with definitions there is a consensual feeling among those who understand the form; we know that DRAGONFLIGHT belongs in the genre and that ARROWSMITH does not. Don't bother me with why, Jack. But if one wants to take the Knight path of implied lesser resistance I would prefer Fred Pohl's far more useful, provocative and contained: "Science fiction is a way of thinking about things". Science fiction, in short, is a methodology and an approach.



Pohl is onto something important here and if one can define what that way of thinking about things is one is, perhaps, as close to a working definition of science fiction as will be necessary to understand almost all of it. Let me have a try at this (noting my indebtedness to A.J. Budrys who has worked this corridor a bit, most notably in his introduction to John Varley's short-story collection, THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION).

Science fiction, at the center, holds that the encroachment of technological or social change will make the future different and that it will feel different to those within it. In a technologically altered culture people will regard themselves and their lives in ways that we cannot apprehend; that is the first part of the science fiction vision but the important part follows: the effects of changing technology upon people will be more profound than change brought about by psychological or social stress. What technological alteration, the gleaming or putrid knife of the future is going to do to us far overbalances the effects of adultery, divorce, clinical depression, rap groups, consciousness raising or even the old law firm of sack, pillage, loot & burn. It is these changes, those imposed extrinsically by force which really matter, the science fiction vision holds, and in their inevitability and their force they trivialize the closed-in, psychological interactions in which most of us transact most of our lives. Lasting, significant change is uncontrollable and uncontrollably coming in on us; regardless of what we think or how we feel, we have lost control of our lives. When the aliens debark from the RIGEL IV to deal with Colonization Problem, the saved and the unsaved, adulterous and chaste, psychoanalyzed and decompensated will be caught up in their terrible tracer beams and absorb the common fate; when the last layer of protective ozone is burnt out by International Terror & Trade the EST discussion leaders, born again Baptists and doctors of clinical psychology will perish together.

This is what is being said, implicitly, in all of the crazy and convoluted stories of the thirties and forties behind the funny covers; more sedately and occasionally in hardcover it is being said today. Because this vision is inimical to the middle-class Western vision (increased self-realization is increased control), because it tends to trivialize if not mock the vision of the modern novel as it has been painstakingly developed from Fielding (the shaping of experience is



the explanation of experience), genre science fiction has been in trouble with the larger culture from the outset if not directly at odds with it. Science fiction has had a hearing from those who control access to the larger reading audience at only a few points in its history (1946, 1956, 1972 seem to be good suggested years of encounter) and in every case after a brief consideration has been repudiated. The enormously successful media science fiction of the seventies (most although not all of it debased adventure stories) has forced literary science fiction into juxtaposition with the culture and the increase in readership, funnelled in from STAR TREK and STAR WARS, has guaranteed that publishers will not permit it this time to go away... but science fiction is hardly, at the beginning of the eighties a more reputable and critically accepted genre than it was thirty years ago and it is likely to assume that it never will be. It is too threatening.

This leads away from the question of definition but is the central point after all. Science fiction at the center is a dangerous literature; it represents the beast that has been from the onset of the era of enlightenment at the heart of intellectual and technological advance. As the technology became more sophisticated and intrusive, as our lives in the post-industrial twentieth century came to be dominated (consciously or often unconsciously) by technology, science fiction became a more sophisticated and cunning medium, a more clever beast to match the medium. We have not grasped the implications; if we do not this stuff will destroy us is what science fiction has been saying (among many other things) for more than half a century now; it may be preaching only to be converted but the objective and terrible truth, screamed by the

beast in the heart of the night will not go away and so neither, despite the hostility of the culture, the ineptitude of many of its practitioners, the loathing of most of its editors, the corruption of most of its readers ... neither will science fiction. It, if not any given writer, will run the course.

-- 1980: New Jersey

SCIENCE FICTION AS PICASSO

Consider: Perhaps not five hundred careers or a thousand but one; not all of the myriad voices but one voice, not the individual struggles and destinies but the single arc of a single creator now in the middle of its sixth decade. All of the voices mingling, murmuring into one, overtones in the one chord. Science fiction as one artist. Science fiction -- if you will -- as Picasso.

It is not the artifacts but the vision, not the material but the theme which dominates in this form. This has been pointed out long before; it is not an original insight. Science fiction, Fred Pohl has said, is the only genre in which collaboration is common-place, in which collaborative works of quality are prevalent because science fiction is a pool of ideas, a manner of approach, writers function less from their idiosyncratic vision (as is the case with "serious" literature) or their ability to recombine elements of the form (the mystery and the Western) than from their immersion in the approach. Science fiction, Pohl said, is a way of thinking about things.

That way of thinking (worth an other essay) is probably that the future will feel different, that it will not be another version of the past but something now undefinable ... and that social and technologic-

al change will have an effect upon the individual human condition to exceed that of the private experience. That way of thinking underlay the form from the outset and bound all of its principals and minor actors to service, great or small, of the vision itself.

Science fiction is a single, demented, multi-tentacled artist singing and painting and transcribing in fashion clumsy and elegant, errant and imitative, innovative and repetitious the way the future would feel. Science fiction born in 1926, dreaming through its childhood in the 1930s, achieving change of voice and the beginning of adult features at the age of 13 at the end of the decade, shooting through adolescence in the 1940s with all of the misdirected energy and hints of promise of the adolescent, arrival at a shaky legal maturity at the end of that decade with the expansion of the market and the full incorporation of a range of styles and techniques, young adulthood in the sixties with all of the knowledge turned loose in a hundred ways, some toward no consequence, others foreshadowing the shape of maturity. Science fiction at thirty-five eligible to be President, productive of fluency, science fiction at forty in the mid-sixties with all the hints of mid-life panic ... chaos, fragmentation, the replication of childhood, the donning of new masks. Science fiction settling down from its decade of panic in the mid-seventies to pursue what it had misplaced as a young writer, reworking the familiar in thoroughgoing fashion. Science fiction now at the threshold of old age, the faint whiff of alcohol and decadence as it goes toward the millennium. Science fiction, that demented artist of which we are all but cells and cilia. Blood and bone.

Picasso went on and on, from green period to blue, from the cubist to the surreal to the classical to the querulous serenity of old age

interrupted by flashes of self-loathing and mockery. He was not the greatest of artists but he had the greatest of careers; perhaps was the only painter of the first rank (or close to it) who was able to articulate his vision to its fullest range and implication through all the chronology that he could have expected, able to move his career in embrace with his life until the two of them, not out of joint, could end together. Science fiction will live longer than Picasso -- barring the apocalypse our little category is going to be around until at least 2019 -- and it remains to be seen how the tickertoon holders and curators of the third millennium, as they poke around our own museum will take our works but this much, this much is clear ... we may be less than the sum of all our parts but we are far, far more in the aggregate than individually we ever took ourselves to be. None of us can build science fiction, none of us can destroy it. Science fiction gave us voice and the voice however directed must be toward its perpetuation. The Picasso of the late nineteen-sixties savagely drawing blood from LA DEMOISELLES D'AVIGNON caused only his own veins to sing while the painting cool and beyond his caring hung on the walls of the Modern Museum for all the crowd to see and pity the twisted but beckoning harlots.

-- 1980: New Jersey

COME FOOL, FOLLIFY

The editor and I were talking of large science fiction conventions. Editors and writers, fans and hangers-on who have hated one another, some of them for forty years, come by the thousands and dwell in the same space for several days. Old passions, old griefs, it must be understood that envy and recrimination in science fiction are higher per capita than anywhere else except, possibly, the reform wing of the New York democratic party. "It doesn't mean anything, though", the editor said. "If these people were really serious they'd kill each other".

Ah. The capsulization of science fiction. In print and behind one another's backs we** will revile, condemn, curse and whisper scurrilities of the most urgent sort: face to face we whisper in reasonable tongue. Old enemies buy one another drinks, new mistresses and old whisper confidences in corners. Perpetrators of venomous fanzines will ask writers to autograph. As the editor



said, if we were serious we would certainly kill but the key to science fiction -- perhaps the key to the Ultimate Mystery itself -- is that it is not a serious field at all. In fact, it is frivolous.

The nature of the form counsels frivolity. Consider the readers' slack-jawed wonder: f1 travel, haunting sea beasts on the Jovian plain, mutiny on the Antares bypass, alternate and mysterious worlds in which dragons fly and understand Elizabethan ... and then it is time for dinner, the chem assignment or the uptown local. Escape fiction, you know. If the reader were to really deal with this material on the level apparently set he would be quite unable to make the changes. How can one carry on even the gestures of one's life if one is rocketing over Jupiter astride a sea beast? One reads science fiction -- even at the age of eight one had better read it -- in contract. Just kidding you know. Don't take it straight. The same fail-safe factor seems to operate in the SF reader *** as within the American consumer; no one really takes those ads seriously, you know. One could go quite insane if one demanded the vision of America squeezed through the interstices of Cadillac, Crest, Miller. Everyone over the age of two (might it be six months?) here knows that ads are ... well, just ads, folks. As science fiction is just science fiction.

Smil the writer. Four cents a word, maybe five, portions and outlines, magazine rates, editors, special intergalactic issues, put an 8 1/2 x 11 in the machine and let it go. Whoops! and a flight to Mars; whee! and an invasion of the capitol by the hired assassins of Merm, whap! and a parallel universe in which time runs countrawise rather than causally and how much of this can I get done before dinner and is Terry paying on acceptance these days or on publisher payout to him? The first fine flight of youth becomes with any kind of persistence at all, the routine of middle age; if it did not; if one began to dwell in these universes, take the Merm seriously, in-

cur a deep sense of obligation to make the Merm real -- ****

The effects of writing science fiction in quantity and over a period of time have been amply discussed, the carryover is not insignificant and the damages evident. One does, as a science fiction writer, tend to hate a little more richly, cleave a little more tightly, recriminate somewhat more sensationally ... but only up to a point and quickly beyond that sets in reluctance. It is one thing to despise the colleague who stole your plot idea from a forgotten Ace double and got it into hardcover; it is another to plot against the wretched editor who bought that book and rejected your own while also making love to your ex-mistress; it is another yet to come up against the very good folks themselves in the hotel bar and deal with it. ***** A handclasp will suffice and a word of cheer; after all the editor may be back in the market right now. Your old colleague who is somewhere upstairs drunkenly fucking your ex-wife has been doing this kind of thing since 1953 and surely you are only one (and unimportantly) his victims, he's done worse to others and besides, if you recall, you did the same to him when you wiped that WORLDS OF IF short story gimmick for your own 1964 Pyramid novel. Who knows what he might be saying about you? Besides, the old swine is consultant now for a medium-sized paper back firm and your agent has some portions and outlines on offer: they might even be there. Then again they might not. It all depends on whether you can lay them off elsewhere before you come crawling. In any case, this convention is not the place to throw down the gauntlet. Is it? Let's be reasonable, friend. Besides a scene would only make the future more difficult; there's no end to this you see, for a lifetime he and you and the editor are going to be showing up at these things and a Philadelphia blowup would lead only to a Boston beguine or a London coda.

No. Take your losses and live with them. You do -- one does, after all -- have to deal with these people for the duration; they have



been around, all of you have been around since 1953, why should anything change now? Or next week?

You take your losses, you stick the editor with the bill, you look for a new connection or an unembittered older one. You go through the weekend and return to what you call home. If you were serious, yes, you might kill the bastards but then again if they were serious they would kill you. Right? Every loss a gain, every action a reaction, the great mid-century vision of the middle class and science fiction is nothing -- anyone who ponders this for five minutes will see it clear, cheers Trenholm -- if it is not a middle class phenomenon.

-- 1980: New Jersey

THE ENGINES OF THE NIGHT

Science fiction is the only branch of literature whose poorer examples are almost invariably used by critics outside the genre to attack all of it. A lousy western is a lousy western, a seriously-intended novel that falls apart is a disaster ... but a science fiction novel that fails illustrates the inadequacy of the genre, the hollowiness of the fantastic vision, the banality of the sci-fi writer, the failure of imagination when applied to a pulp format ... the phenomenon is as old as the category itself (in fact for the first quarter-century outside

The late Robert Lindner in THE FIFTY MINUTE HOUR wrote memorably of a science fiction reader who did not appear to have the fail-safe mechanism (he lived in an imaginary universe and half-dragged poor Lindner into it) and it is for this reason that the chapter has become famous in our field and frequently anthologized. This is what happens to someone who really believes this shit is the nodding subtext.

Truth in packaging: Several science fiction writers have lost the handle and spent time in mental hospitals. They all seem to have come out in pretty good shape though and the proportion of admissions in the field is far less than amongst the general population.

Everyone at a convention is in the hotel bar. Usually simultaneously.

media would not even review us, so contemptible was science fiction) and as fresh as the latest rotten book.

Not so long ago, a weak and over-extended bildungsroman by a young writer was attacked spitefully in a publication called THE SOHO WEEKLY NEWS; Jonathan Rosenbaum then turned in the last 500 words to the field itself, concluding that sci-fi writers could not deal with the modern reality because they atheosized machinery over mortality, stripped humanity in their fiction of dignity and drained it of the capacity to feel. In so saying the reviewer indicated not only thorough ignorance of most of the serious work done in this field since the early fifties but was patently using a novel by a young writer of indifferent reputation to vilify the genre.

Not atypical. In a 1972 book of essays, REDISCOVERIES, devoted to the favorite lost novels of a dozen literary writers, Walker Percy, in cautiously praising Walter Miller's A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ (a novel which has never been "lost" to science fiction but which has been in print continuously since publication in 1959) took the most elaborate pains to point out that although the novel had the trappings of pop sci-fi it had more serious undercurrent, elements of mysticism and religious ambivalence (subjects close to Percy's own artistic sensibility) were handled in a fashion more complex than might be expected of science fiction ... and that the novel might actually reward study by serious readers who would otherwise find science fiction of little interest.

It was almost as if Percy had to balance off his response to CANTICLE against real fear that unrestricted

praise, seen in the young quarters, could threaten his credentials as a "serious" writer. Hardly has so trembling a voice been raised for the defense. (Reminiscent of the eulogy hesitantly offered for the legendary Meanest Man in Town: "Well," someone said after a long, terrible pause, "he never missed a spittoon, right?") And in a review of my own GUERNICA NIGHT some years ago Joyce Carol Oates took pains to make clear that the novel's concerns were, ah, spiritual and metaphysical and that its virtues came from it being unlike the science fiction to which she was accustomed.

Science fiction, as I say, stands alone in literature as being forced to judgment by its weaker examples, denied in praise of its best. Outside of literature there are numerous examples: racial prejudice for instance. The member of the minority must be a "good example of his race" and in so doing exhibits virtues which make him "not really like the rest of them at all" and the bad example sets the standard, "They're all like that". Modern music is like this: infrequent performances by the major orchestras of Webern or Wuorinen bestir subscription audiences and often lead to venomous critical attacks upon the entire specter of the dissonant or the atonal. (Pierre Boulez left the Philharmonic for many reasons but not the least of them was his insistence upon exposing subscribers to that crazy modern junk.) Contemporary painters, sculptors or directors of avant-garde stage and film know exactly what I mean. Every weak example of the form is there to be used to pillory all of it. "Modern music", "modern art", "modern dance" become as indistinguishable for the infuriated critic (and by implication his audience) as does, pity the beast, "science fiction".

Why? Well, our genre is dangerous and threatening at its best (and perhaps even more so at its worst), it implies a statement and view of the world which is unbearable for the unaccustomed. Alice Sheridan theorizes so anyway in an afterword to her story "Her Smoke Rose up Forever" (FINAL STAGE/1974) some years ago: post-war science fiction raised the proposition that our fate was uncontrollable and that the machines were going to blow us out of existence; the middle class, as represented by the critics fled this insight: Oh please o please tell us that it is our swimming pools and martinis and mistresses and expense accounts and mortgages and angst which makes us so unhappy, not radio-active dust or the mad engines of doom.

After one brief, terrified look at genre science fiction in the early postwar period, the middle class flung it into furthest darkness and dove into those swimming pools of O'Hara's or Cheever's suburbs, the forests of Truman Capote's or Eudora Welty's night. They wanted no part of the possibility that technology had appropriated the sense or control of their lives, these were our lives, dammit, we got ourselves into this mess and the \$75-an-hour shrinks, the encounter groups and a new lifestyle will get us out. Science fiction, post-Hiroshima, may indeed have been dealing -- as Vonnegut suggested also -- with the only things that really mattered, the choice between the thousand year voyage to heaven or hell but if postwar American life -- as Cheever and O'Hara were themselves insistent -- was based upon the avoidance of things that really mattered, science fiction could not have been a comforting literature. Besides, there were all those crazy covers and kids loved it so; anything that kids seemed to love (it has been noted that this culture hates children and old people) might be worth hating.

And within science fiction also, beneath the robots and the radioactive dust, the nihilism -- which like that of modern art, modern music, street theatre -- that suggests none of the devices of preventative maintenance (adultery, alcohol, avarice, prayer) really matter at all.

Which means that our worst examples, even our mediocrities, will be used over and again as a club to beat back the demon. That our best will be ignored. And that all of it will be denied.

Ah, but still. Still oh still. Still Kazin, Broyard, Epstein, Podhoretz and Howe: grinding away slowly in the center of all purpose, carrying us to the millennium regardless: the engines of the night.

-- 1980: New Jersey

BYSTANDERS MAY BE
UNINVOLVED, BUT THEO-
LOGICALLY, THEY CANNOT
BE INNOCENT!
LITERARY CRITICS,
FOR INSTANCE.



SMALL PRESS NOTES

BY THE EDITOR

THE PATCHIN REVIEW #1 - July 1981
 Edited by Charles Platt
 The Patchin Review \$2.00
 9 Patchin Place
 New York, NY 10011

Well, Charles Platt likes a lively zine, full of calumny, cohorts and name-calling, plus some truth, a dash of realism, a tinge of wisdom.

Here is Barry Malzberg looking sourly at current science fiction [Methinks he's making a career of it.], and here is Harlan Ellison calling out John Shirley for a writing shootout---Selectrics at ten paces, perhaps---a confident battle-ship challenging a frigate, and here are a clutch of pseudonymous writers and an editor venting gripes and science fiction gossip, and here is John Shirley emitting that age-old cry for better writing in sf, here dragging Larry Niven over the coals along with Barry Longyear. Barry seems too young for such deep wounds, but I imagine he'll survive.

The party line running through **THE PATCHIN REVIEW** is the call for boldness in sf, something opposed by the conglomerate mentality which calls the shots in mass market sf these days.

There are several dozen short, acidic, jaundiced-eye book reviews in the back pages.

Try this new magazine; you'll love it or hate it.

Offset, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, 36 pages + covers.

FUTURE FOCUS #12 - Fall 1980
 Edited and published by Roger Reynolds.
 Future Focus - 2.50
 1301 Bernard Av.
 Findlay, OH 45840

Essentially a comix-zine with a dash of poetry, fiction, interview and articles on other subjects.

There are artists' portfolios, sketches....some good, some bad.

FUTURE FOCUS tries to cover too many bases.

Offset, 8 1/2 x 11, 52 pages including heavy covers.

MIRIAD #3 - Spring 1981
 Edited by Bill Marks
 Miriad Productions - \$1.50
 61 Warner Av.
 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M4A 1Z5

Highly professional layout, startling color cover of space-borne nude, this zine focuses on sf, fan-



tasy and horror films and the people who create them. There is a linkage/recognition of sf semi-prozines and fanzines via reviews by Taral.

An Adam Smith art portfolio.

MIRIAD is mostly into puff and adulation of the movies and VIPs it writes about.

Offset, 8 1/2 x 11, 44 pages including covers.

THE CARTOON HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE VOL.6 "Who Are These Athenians?"
 590 - 479 B.C.

By Larry Gonick
 Rip Off Press, \$1.50

Based on the accounts of Herodotus, this volume concerns the Greeks and their long war with the Persian Empire.

Gonick has an unflinching eye for the ruthlessness and cruelty of ancient peoples during war and conquest, and somehow he makes it funny.

One thing you learn in these volumes: in them days being a king, a prince, a general, a soldier, a common citizen---was a high risk existence. They seemed to follow the dictum: "Live fast, die young, and have a butchered corpse."

INDEX TO THE SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINES - 1980

Compiled by Jerry Boyajian and Kenneth R. Johnson
 Twacl Press, \$4.00 postpaid.
 POB 87, MIT Branch Post Office
 Cambridge, MA 02139

They list stories, authors, verse, graphic art stories, editorials, artists. Even have an appendix listing sf in miscellaneous magazines such as **OMNI** and various mystery mags, **COSMOPOLITAN**, **SATURDAY EVENING POST**....

All well organized. Printed offset, 8 1/2 x 11, 28 pages.

OTHERGATES #2 SUMMER, 1981 - A GUIDE TO MARKETS FOR SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY FOR WRITERS AND ARTISTS --- \$3.00
 Edited and Published by Millea Kenin
 Unique Graphics
 1025 55th Street,
 Oakland, CA 94608

A New Listing and Update sheet is included.

There are over a hundred markets listed: pro, semi-pro, and amateur. Most are outlets for work, not true paying markets.

A very valuable resource.

Offset, 8 1/2 x 11, 48 pages.

OGRE Jan. 1981
 Edited by Andrew Andrews
 Peabody Press \$2.00
 P.O. Box 322
 New Holland, PA 17557

OGRE is nicely put together, with good to fine artwork, and some interesting writing. I found the interviews with Ben Bova, Stephen Donaldson, and Robert Sheckley of major interest. The poetry was awful.

OGRE also has articles on SF/fantasy movies, fantasy gaming conventions and fantasy role-playing, a review of comics...an Anne McCaffrey analysis...short, vignette fiction.

OGRE covers a lot of bases but doesn't score many runs.

48 pages, 8 1/2 x 11, heavy covers, offset, typeset.

OVERLOAD #5
 Edited by Evan Mills \$2.00
 1951 Quaker St.
 Eureka, CA 95501

The finest thing about this issue is the marvelous color cover drawing by Duane Flatmo, showing a TV set busily encasing a hypnotized viewer of its screen in a covering of bricks and mortar.

Inside the issue is a display of sf/fantasy graphic stories [comics] of less-than-pro quality, some experimental. **OVERLOAD** bills itself "The Fantasy Humor Magazine" on the cover, but doesn't deliver past the cover.

Rod Marchetti is interviewed by Don Chin. I'm always interested in artists. Marchetti is a stippler, and very good.



BEYOND THE FRINGE

EXPLORATIONS OF THE PARTLY-KNOWN

On May 12, 1962 at a speech to the graduating cadets at West Point Military Academy, General Douglas MacArthur shocked those listening with the following statement: "... we deal now, not with things of this world alone ..." but "of ultimate conflict between a united human race and the sinister forces of some other planetary galaxy."

What information had MacArthur uncovered that lead him to the conclusion that humanity would one day have to fight "sinister forces of some other planetary galaxy"? Granted, MacArthur did not use correct astronomical terms in his speech to the West Point cadets, but what impelled him to even mention such a notion before the present and future leaders of America's defense establishment? What had convinced this four-star general who in 1930 at age fifty, was the youngest man of his history ever to be named Army Chief of Staff, that he would have to fight aliens in the future?

It started in the early 1940s: MacArthur had left the Philippines to organize the Allied counterattack on the Japanese, when several times his plane and others were buzzed by small lights which darted back and forth across the sky. These lights became known as "foo fighters"; they appeared during World War II, were never satisfactorily identified and vanished shortly thereafter. MacArthur was worried about them and fearing that they might be some secret weapon of the Japanese or Axis Powers, set up a special task force to look into "foo fighters", find out what they were and if they posed a threat to Allied security.

The war continued, MacArthur returned in triumph to the Philippines and on September 1 (U.S. time), 1945, he accepted the surrender of the Japanese aboard the battleship Missouri. The Foo Foo Task Force, as it came to be known, had by then completed its report. Its conclusions, obviously especially after the Japanese surrendered, was that the "foo fighters" weren't a Japanese or Axis Power Secret weapon, otherwise they would have been used to prevent Japan's defeat (and conversely in Europe, where they also showed up, Germany's defeat). The frustrating question remained: What were they? The report, remembered by one of MacArthur's aides, (the report itself has mysteriously disappeared but more on that later), said that the objects were of undeterminate origin, that they were neither friendly nor hostile in intent. The aide said that after MacArthur read the final report (in March of 1946), he turned to the head of the task force and said: "What is their intent?"

The officer replied that he could "do little more than speculate". The general reportedly replied, "Well, then, speculate." The officer said from all reports of their behavior, the only sensible speculation was that they were scouts. MacArthur asked, "For whom?" and went on to say that there wasn't a country on the face of the Earth that had craft that advanced. The aide replied, "Exactly". But MacArthur reportedly refused to believe the alternative, that they were extra-terrestrial, snorting at the idea and saying that the only thing in space was "the sun and a few pieces of rock".



The aide told me that the matter was dropped there and that for the next several months MacArthur was extremely busy with the Japanese, implementing the substance and details of steps designed to turn Japan into a democracy.

It was unusual during MacArthur's period of virtual rulership of Japan, that he had tremendous private resources, including an Intelligence Staff that covered the world and acted independently from the regular U.S. intelligence services. MacArthur was given, according to another acquaintance (a business man who had dealings in the Far East in the late forties) a "... remarkably wide degree of latitude, from the meddlers at the State Department". Thus, on June 24, 1947, when Kenneth Arnold had his highly-publicized sighting of UFOs flitting amongst Mt. Rainier and other Cascade peaks, MacArthur had worldwide intelligence resources, some not available to either the United States or the Russian Empire.

MacArthur, described by a close associate as a man who disliked mysteries and had "an intense aversion to the unknown, particularly if it appeared to be potentially a threat", ordered, in the summer of 1947, a complete task force to gather information on UFOs and to find out "from what country or locale" the objects were coming. Whatever information they found was inconclusive when MacArthur was relieved of his command by Truman, in April, 1951.

MacArthur returned to the States and after a ticker-tape parade in New York City, made a speech before Congress in which he made the famous reference to an old military ballad: "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away". He dabbled briefly in politics in 1952, unsuccessfully ran for the Presidency in several Republican Primaries and later became board chairman of Remington Rand Corporation, now Sperry Rand.

BY WESLEY GRAHAM

His fascination with UFOs was unabated, one acquaintance describing it as "...an obsession with the damn things". He even had several people who worked on his earlier group, do some private investigating for him. In the late Fifties (sources cited 1957, '58 or '59), they came up with some piece of evidence so overwhelming that MacArthur, according to a business acquaintance, "changed his entire outlook on human affairs". When MacArthur and his investigators attempted to learn more, the National Security Agency stood squarely in their way. A friend of MacArthur's, working for another government agency, remembers MacArthur asking him to "check into the NSA's activities and find out what their interest was in UFOs". The friend was frustrated by a stone wall of silence, and maintains that shortly after his inquiries, a tap was found on his home and work phones. MacArthur then went directly to the NSA, who denied any knowledge of the UFO business and referred MacArthur to the Air Force. MacArthur furiously told a friend that not only were his operatives being stymied in their investigations by the NSA, but that he was getting the government run-around.

Finally, MacArthur gave up, saying to one friend, that they could stop his investigation but they could not keep him from speaking his mind. And speak his mind he did, to any listening group. MacArthur warned that humanity must stop fighting among themselves and unite to meet "the deadliest foe mankind has ever known". In addition to giving the speech at West Point quoted earlier in this text, he warned President Kennedy not to get into a land war in Asia, that there were sinister forces the human race must unite to defeat. This was shortly after he helped settle a dispute, at Kennedy's request, between the Amateur Athletic Union and the National Collegiate Athletic Association that was endangering the 1964 U.S. Olympic Team. Kennedy did not take MacArthur's warning seriously and sources close to the White House said that Kennedy thought MacArthur was off his rocker. Less than six months after Kennedy's assassination, MacArthur died on April 15, 1964.

Here was a man, who in the early Fifties was advocating that we extend the Korean War into China and that we selectively bomb certain Red Chinese targets, yet less than a dozen years later warns against involvement in any land war in Asia, and makes public appeals for humanity to unite! to fight a common foe. What made him change his mind so drastically?

One person who worked on the task force in the late Forties, and later

for Mac Arthur personally in the Fifties, reported, "We were not able to ascertain the nature of the craft, or where they originated" in the late Forties study, "but we were able to ascertain that these objects were craft, all of this information went into the file". In the later investigation my informant reported that "conclusive proof was furnished that the craft were intelligently operated by denizens whose origin was outside of our planet's atmosphere. We were also able to ascertain that these aforesaid denizens were hostile in intent". When I pressed him for more information, he replied that to give specifics would be a violation of national security. When I asked him what authority gave that opinion, he said the National Security Agency. When I asked him what happened to the file he had referred to, he replied that MacArthur had kept it personally and that after he died, it disappeared. I asked what he thought had happened to it; he answered, "I do not know, nor do I want to -- if anything, the Mossad stole it".

The Mossad! For those of you who don't know, the Mossad is the Israeli Secret Police. I asked him, "Why the Mossad?" His answer was, "I've probably said too much, but I'll tell you this" and his voice rose, "Everywhere we went in the Rand study", the Fifties investigation, "we ran into the Mossad; I believe they are the ones who sicced the NSA on us -- and before you ask the question, no, goddam it, I don't know why they were interested; I do know they hung around the general's (MacArthur's) house often enough, especially after his West Point speech ... we even found a tap on the general's phone after the visit to the White House". I asked my informant if he was ever bugged or followed. "Yeah, we all were". "All?" I asked him. "All of us that had helped the general on this, and that were still in touch with him."

I asked him his opinion of the Air Force Blue Book and Condon reports. "A coverup, the Air Force people turned over anything important to the NSA; the Condon people weren't told a thing."

I am still continuing research on this story. Clearly, MacArthur knew something, but what? Until those associated with the investigation care to talk or until the missing files suddenly appear, MacArthur's comments and the entire subject of UFOs will remain shrouded in mystery, beyond the fringe of "accepted" knowledge.

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THE VIVISECTOR

BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

AND SPRINKLED JUST A BIT ON TOP OF EACH BANANA SPLIT

STEPHEN KING'S DANSE MACABRE
Everest House, 1981
400 pp., \$15.95

If you're at all interested in horror fiction or fantasy that is more than a Regency Romance with elves (about which more in some future column), rush out and buy this book, as thousands before you have done.

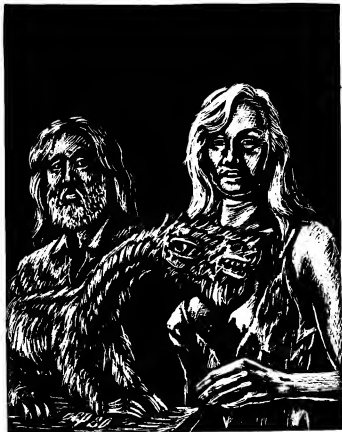
Now that that's over with, we can talk about the book. First of all, there's the matter of the title. Nowhere does it say "DANSE MACABRE by Stephen King", although it is convenient to refer to it as such. Secondly, there's a matter of classification. It isn't a critical work, really. King has some choice things to say about critics. It is like a long convention speech, witty, perceptive, filled with reminiscences and insights into how various of Mr. King's works were created. His analysis of CARRIE, book versus film, is particularly good. It is very hard for a writer to write about his own work without seeming either affectingly humble ("Aw, shucks, ain't nothin'") or pompous. King does it without seeming effort, engagingly in fact, simply by saying what he means, candidly, with no pretentious jargon getting in the way. Which brings back the convention speech analogy. DANSE MACABRE is simply a fascinating rap on the horror field and King's involvement in it. It is not an easy book to put down. I guess if it were a speech you would sit there, or stand in the back, unwilling to slip out even for a minute, for all 400 pages worth, until your bladder burst.

Like any book that's alive, that has any ideas swimming around in it, there are points raised in DANSE MACABRE which are arguable. If you totally agree with any book like this, even one you wrote yourself, well, I have a few theories: You are a drone, the author is a drone; you're a good little Red Guard and the author is Chairman Mao. Specific opinions never match.

In the movie section, I'm sure everybody will agree that HORROR ON PARTY BEACH is awful (Actually, I never saw it, but I had the magazine photo-novel version as a child. It didn't look very impressive when I was twelve. King calls it "an abysmal little wet fart of a picture", again eschewing formal academic jargon), but I always thought LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS to be a masterpiece of not entirely inadvertent camp, and King seems to put the two in the same category. There's a whole chapter on "The Horror Movie as Junk Food", in which he tells us that, in the end, we have to discard most of this garbage, but, but ... there is such a thing as exquisite garbage. THE NIGHT OF THE LEPUS (Attack of the Killer Bunnies) is a wonderful piece of "found art" if you find it

by chance on late night TV, but really a waste of time to watch again. King probably liked Cronenberg's SCANNERS (he keeps referring to *THEY CAME FROM WITHIN* as "brilliant"), but I found that movie's purely inadvertent humor its only redeeming value, and I would not want to see it again. LITTLE SHOP is something special. I reserve a special syntactic cobweb for its memory. Apparently Stephen King does not. We do not agree. The important thing to remember is that you don't read a book like this because you expect to agree, or you want the author to agree with you. If he writes well enough, you are hooked and you just want to see what he has to say. King does.

I admit I am puzzled, however,



by his complete failure to mention THE INNOCENTS (a brilliant adaptation of THE TURN OF THE SCREW) anywhere, even in his list of 100 significant films, which includes such, ah, lesser items as THE KILLER SHREWS and THE DEADLY BEES.

You can tell how important films are to King. The sections on them are nearly as long as those on books. But we also have a chapter on the basic archetypes ("Tales of the Tarot"), the whole idea of horror (Tales of the Hook!) and one in which ten works are examined as examples of everything that is good in the field. I doubt anybody will agree on all those either.

There are lots of quotable passages. Here's one that has to do with the subject of my last column:

"... Lovecraft ... opened the way for me, as he had for others before me: Robert Bloch, Clark Ashton Smith, Frank Belknap Long, Fritz Leiber and Ray Bradbury among them. And while Lovecraft, who died before the Second World War, could fulfill many of his visions of unimaginable horror, does not figure largely in this book, the reader would do well to remember that his shadow, so long and gaunt, and his eyes so dark and puritanical, which overlaid almost all of the important horror fiction that has come since. (P. 102)"

King's first encounter with serious horror fiction came with a Lovecraft paperback. He knows perfectly well that the Providence Spook's influence is too vast to get away from. But at the same time, his interests are a lot broader. He does things and appreciates things (like THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE) that H.P.L. would certainly not have approved of. He will even admit that there are three levels in this sort of thing, three ways to get at the reader's emotions: terror, horror and gross-out, and he isn't ashamed to go for the last when need be. Which brings me to the heading of this column. It's a line from a Tom Lehrer song, about a druggist who murdered someone, ground up the corpse, and did what the line says. Very funny. Haha. I'm sure King could, if he wanted to, write an intense, absolutely riveting horror story on that premise. In fact, it seems to be just the sort of story King is into. In a footnote he mentions an unpublished tale, "Survival Type" in which a surgeon, shipwrecked on a desert isle, amputates and eats parts of his body, one by one. Nervous laughter. Humor and horror are so close together.

Most enlightening idea in the book: The horror writer is an agent of the status-quo, as conservative as a Republican in a three-piece suit. This idea is explored in considerable detail, almost exploded at the end (an eloquent explanation of why horror fiction exists and appeals to people, there for anyone with the brains or sensitivity to understand it) then reaffirmed. It makes a great deal of sense. Lovecraft makes a great deal more sense in light of this insight.

Worst idea in the book: King seems to occasionally fall prey to a familiar prejudice. He annexes things into his chosen field, out of science fiction, defining science fiction in the narrowest sense, as stories about machines and not people, hard science only. THE SHRINKING MAN isn't science fiction, the subtext reads. It's a good book. Argh. I don't see why science fiction can't have all the characteristics he ascribes to good books.

Which is just another point of disagreement. Disagreeing is good for you. It keeps you awake. At the very bottom line, King's book is never, never dull.

THE SHADOW OUT OF ...

H.P. LOVECRAFT AND LOVECRAFT CRITICISM: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

By S.T. Joshi
Kent State University Press, 1981
XXXIV plus 473 pp., \$27.50

You really can't get away from Lovecraft, can you? Next time you hear someone denounce him as a no-good hack appealing to sick juveniles, etc. etc., ask the denouncer to stop and consider: why are books like this one published? (Or for that matter, Joshi's H.P. LOVECRAFT: FOUR DECADES OF CRITICISM, reviewed last issue.) Why do established university presses publish them? They do not publish such books about Robert E. Howard or Clark Ashton Smith or Henry S. Whitehead. Why has enough been written about Lovecraft, and enough translations been made that a very sparsely annotated bibliography of it all, probably not complete (like Zeno's Paradox, Lovecraft Studies will never quite make it: somebody always discovers something, writes something), takes up 473 pages of often itty-bitty print? There isn't even that much material about Machen or Dunsany or Cabell or any of the other "respectable" fantasists of Lovecraft's time. When a writer seems questionable, when somebody's taste may be at



fault, the only thing you can do is wait to see what posterity says. Well, the verdict is in. Lovecraft is unquestionably the most successful SF/Fantasy writer of his generation. It must be that his work is somehow special.

Lovecraft Studies, like Joyce Studies or Shakespeare Studies, have become an on-going industry. It reflects, rather than dictates Lovecraft's importance. It probably has no effect on his popularity at all. In the course of things, much worthless material is Piled Higher and Deeper, but for those interested, much good stuff has also been produced. If you are at all a Lovecraft scholar, it is a must. You don't necessarily have to own it, but at least you'll want to refer to it frequently, so bug your university librarian. This biblio-

graphy is probably the most extensive and detailed we will have for decades. It is a landmark work. I've already found it useful. I was about to label Lovecraft's "Notes on Interplanetary Fiction" the first piece of in-genre SF criticism ever written, because it was allegedly published in 1927. You have to use a bibliography on matters like this, because actually checking the original might well involve a trip to Providence and access to the collection at Brown University. Key Lovecraft items are that rare. Now I find out that the Chalker bibliography (which was published in an Arkham House book) is wrong. The essay dates from 1935.

I'll admit that one reason I wanted to see this book was to see what Joshi said about me. I'm not entirely surprised that he dismissed my DREAM QUEST OF H.P. LOVECRAFT (Borgo Press) out of hand. (He also missed the good review it got in CHOICE.) There are errors in it. I want to weed them out in the next edition. There are also heresies in it, and here and there Joshi may be seen smiting the heresies. The kind of critical factionalism I mentioned last issue is definitely present. The barometer, as always, is the treatment of L. Sprague de Camp's LOVECRAFT: A BIOGRAPHY.

I think that Joshi's position might have gotten in the way of his scholarship at one point. Now there are certain shortcomings in his classification system, and the item in question may have slipped through the cracks. You would never know that I wrote an article called "Lovecraft and Lord Dunsany", unless you already did, because he does not list separate articles included in books edited by the person who wrote the article. It's in my ESSAYS LOVECRAFTIAN and listed only in the contents of that book. (Nor does he mention that it was incorporated into DREAM QUEST.) In any case, the item is the most embarrassing piece in all the Lovecraft canon, a bit of doggerel (Lovecraft's attempts at poetry were best summed up by Stephen King; the only good thing he could say was at least they will never be mistaken for Rod McKuen) entitled "On the Creation of Niggers". I know it exists. De Camp wrote it and documents its source. It is this very hanging out of dirty laundry in the pursuit of truth that has made de Camp's name mud among Conservative Lovecraftians.

I trust this is an oversight. The one reason I noticed it is I saw it listed in the chronology in Joshi's other book.

One last note about the surprising uses of this book. Joshi lists an Italian pirating of my "Lovecraft

on Television" hitherto unknown to me. I doubt the magazine IL RE IN GIALLO is still being published, or that I'll ever hear from the culprits, Francesco Faccanoni and Giuseppe Lippi, but if I ever do, I'll know not to trust them. If they want to show their good will, they can at least send me the issue in question.

SONGS FROM THE STARS

By Norman Spinrad

Simon & Schuster, 1980, 287 pp.

\$11.95

Available in paper from Pocket Books

All book reviewing is a subjective affair, and any book might strike one reviewer a particular way because of something in that reviewer's background or interests. I had a problem with this book, and up front I shall tell you why: I don't think I'm old enough for it. I doubt Spinrad so intend it, but I suspect that SONGS FROM THE STARS will have its strongest appeal among readers between the ages of 35 and 45. You have to be able to remember the counter-culture of the 1960s at its height, and to have been either a participant or sympathizer. (If you belonged to the Young Americans for Freedom, forget it.) I am 28, and was in high school at the time (to make matters worse, it was a

prep school) so such goings-on are not exactly vivid firsthand memories to me.

You see, SONGS FROM THE STARS reads like it was written in 1968. Had it actually been published then, I imagine most critics would have pronounced it dated trendy. Perhaps by 1981 it would have become a period piece antique, like THE BUTTERFLY KID. Right now it might best be called a historical reconstruction (It is also simply a rather good novel, but more on that later.) One of its premises is that, after an atomic holocaust, there flourishes in what was once California a society based on 1960s back-to-nature utopianism. The place is called Aquaria. The main characters are named Sunshine Sue and Clear Blue Lou. The people are divided up into tribes and live in communes. They follow "The Way" and are all very Zen. They talk in language that would have been very hip ten or so years ago. Worse yet, the early sections of the narrative itself are written in such language, which means the author's voice is constantly intruding, reminding the reader that he is reading a story.

This is about as real to me as a science fiction novel set in a Beatnik future. (Well, not quite. I don't remember Beatniks at all.) There are so many shrieking implausibilities in the first few chapters that I nearly gave up then and there. Fortunately, I persisted. Once the action leaves Aquaria, the novel gets a lot better. However, quite late, there is a major blunder, when characters who use words like "uncool" and "boogie" are completely puzzled at a mention of a Christian burial.

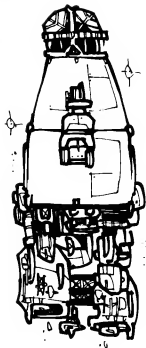
In some ways, SONGS FROM THE STARS provides the clearest example of how not to handle social extrapolation that I have ever seen. The society of the novel is a descendant of our own, yet Spinrad would have us believe that after the destruction of nearly everything, a minor social trend, which has already peaked and reversed, will shape society, while much older and more massively entrenched elements will have no effect whatever. Actually, most of Spinrad's major assumptions are sensible enough. I can well believe that a low-technology, post-atomic society would try desperately to keep the environment clean, and that atomic energy would be feared as sorcery of the worst sort. I can even believe the tribal setup, the communes and the presence of guru-like figures who pass judgment by inspiration. But I cannot believe that the people are going to be 1960s style hippies. I suspect they would be something entirely different,



their beliefs shaped by the traumatic experiences of their ancestors. If they remember anything of the old society, it would surely be some remnant of its most important aspects, probably very distorted. Spinrad's overall plan is okay, but he has all the details wrong.

Be that as it may, once past the opening chapters, the novel keeps you reading. It has the raw power characteristic of Spinrad novels and a certain amount of grace. There are even moments of considerable beauty. The hero and heroine are led, by convoluted means, to collaborate with "black scientists" on an attempt to launch a space shuttle. It seems that just before the cataclysm, a space station had picked up an extra-terrestrial signal. Obviously this is the key to mankind's future. There is one more descent into cliché as the characters fake an alien landing to make the Aquarians unite out of fear (one is almost convinced the author is kidding: there are chapters entitled "The Spaceship Enterprise", "We All Live in a Yellow Submarine" and "Chariot of the Gods"), but in the interplay between the hero and heroine and their scientist guide and the sequences on the space station itself, we get quite an intelligent tale of the effects of power (particularly media power, a long-running Spinradian concern) on individuals, the balance between science and mysticism and finally, a vast cosmic vision worthy of anything in Stapledon. That the "black scientist" should be cold, soul-less and ultimately unable to cope with this vision is hardly a surprise, but somehow Spinrad manages to transcend the stereotype and make him humanly convincing.

Clear Blue Lou is less successful a character, too much a wish-fulfillment. The writing itself is more versatile than you might expect from the first few chapters, moving from slangy trendiness to lucid descriptions to cadenced, near poetry toward the end. The author is clearly in control. The failures must be attributed to deliberate, wrong decisions. The successes are considerable. The book is, ultimately, at war with itself, and I think the right side won.



SMALL PRESS MAGAZINES *Reviewed By* **Darrell Schweitzer**

For the benefit of latecomers, I will explain briefly what this department is all about. I am reviewing any non-newsstand magazines with fiction worth reading.

Ye Ed has passed me a letter from Mike Bracken, who asks in part:

"I was wondering if Darrell . . . might be willing to explain what SF's small press means financially. My own sales inside the SF field have been to small press magazines, with payment ranging from 1/8th per word up to 2¢ per word. For that reason I have not followed the development of SF's small press, nor have I made much effort to sell to the various small press magazines. Can exposure in the small press magazines ultimately lead to sales to the SF prozines, and is it worth the effort financially to bother with the semi-pros?"

Well, Mike, if you're "selling" stories for an eighth of a cent a word, I can see your point. Save

your postage. Two cents is another matter. That's twice what AMAZING pays most people.

Quite frankly, the only thing which will lead to publication in the regular prozines is submitting your stories to the editors of the regular prozines. Let's not kid ourselves. Editors look for talent in slush piles. They don't read various small magazines and say, "Hm, this guy looks good. Let's move him up to the big leagues". Small press magazines are worth your while if you write the kinds of things they specialize in. If you do hard science fiction, there are plenty of markets, and any story you sell to a small press magazine has probably been rejected by ANALOG, ASIMOV'S, etc. If you write fantasy, that's an entirely different market. You have anthologies, TWILIGHT ZONE, ASIMOV'S, F&SF, AMAZING/FANTASTIC occasionally, and the small press magazines for your markets. Take my word for it: WHISPERS, WEIRBOOK, FANTASY TALES and the rest don't subsidize on prozine rejections. They are the bulk of the market in their field.

The money isn't good. Then, again, nobody makes a living writing short stories. I would say don't bother with anything that pays under 1/2¢ a word, because chances are the magazine is so bad you don't want to be published there.

Why does such an appearance get you? Read, that's what. It can lead to anthologization, since stories from such magazines are in every volume of THE YEAR'S BEST FANTASY and THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR. When you are selling novels, and a publisher is willing to do a collection of your stories, you can include stories from small magazines. You can also sell the stories overseas, if you know the foreign market. A good story is a good story, no matter where it appears.

But this isn't a market column. What about the current crop?

FANTASY TALES 6 is a handsome production, with a front cover by Jim Pitts, a back by Fabian. I keep having to break my rule about reviewing reprints with this magazine. Karl Edward Wagner's "The Other One" is a reprint from the 1977 small magazine, ESCAPE (Oh, yeah, Mike, another thing: You can sometimes sell reprints to other small press magazines after a few years), but since that is an obscure source, I don't imagine many readers have seen it. It's a Kane story, and those who like such will probably be delighted. I've never managed to get into the series because Kane is such a heartless scoundrel, without redeeming virtues, and his victories are so inevitable, that I scarcely

care what happens. Worse, this story hinges on a love affair between Kane and a lady. I can't believe he loves anyone, and I can't imagine what she sees in him.

My own "The Last Horror Out of Arkham" (also a reprint, from an even more obscure source) began its career as a bibliographic ghost in the READER'S GUIDE TO THE CHUHU MYTHOS. Later I wrote it as an attempted mercy-killing. The Old Ones win, you see . . . but alas, all was in vain. Bob Bloch did a more elaborate job a couple years later with STRANGE EONS, and people still write these damn things about gibbering horrors and regurgitated seafood. I might mention that the editors left off the dread couplet which adorned the original printing:

"That is not dead which is eternally rewritten;
It's about time the Mythos was quite soundly smitten."

--Abdul Alhasradoomuch

"Payment in Kind" by C.A. Cador is a reprint from GNOSTICA, which is fine, but it also appeared in YEAR'S BEST FANTASY which makes it a trifle overexposed. (If I were running FANTASY TALES, I would re-run from reprints from mass-market paperbacks.) It's a good story, or at least structurally interesting, as each character unwittingly passes the Curse along to the next by telling him about it. More could be done with the idea, but I still have to credit Cador for making me sit up and pay attention. Horror/fantasy is like heroin addiction. You need stronger and stronger doses, and I've been at this for a while.

"Wrapped Up" by Ramsey Campbell is one of those things about robbers in an Egyptian tomb who always meet an eldritch doom. No surprises, but the idea of a mummy as a chrysalis has possibilities. (Again, more than are really shown here.)

"Reflections on a Dark Eye" by Peter Tremayne (he of REVENGE OF DRACULA fame) is entirely too standard for me. It could better be entitled "The Eyeballs of Orlac". Well, comes actually. A guy gets the transplanted comes of a murderer, and . . . you mean you already guessed?

"The Woodcarver's Son" by Robert Cook is over-written and vague. Cook faces the common problem of trying to describe Unearthly Beauty in convincing terms. Well, I assure you going on and on just saying how marvelous it is won't work. The character may get turned on, but the reader doesn't, and this emotional dissociation from the story is fatal. Writers who have pulled this sort of thing off have genuinely produced something strange and beautiful, or

at least visually striking, and Cook hasn't.

I keep waiting for FANTASY TALES to really bowl me over. Once in a great while it does, about as often as the newsstand prozins do. And they publish more and larger issues.

TRIQUARTERLY 49 is a special science fiction issue of a mainstream small press magazine, edited by David Hartwell and Robert Oropo. Such issues can be very interesting. Remember the spectacular SF issue of EDGE Bruce McAllister did a few years ago? And there has been SF-related material in THE LITTLE MAGAZINE.

The star attraction isn't fiction, but a 30,000-word essay by Algis Budrys, which is fully as good as you would expect, and probably will be recognized as a critical landmark. It's worth the price of admission all by itself. However,



I'm supposed to be reviewing fiction:

There are two novel excerpts. Ian MacMillan's SMALL MUTATIONS looks like a well-written post-disaster tale. The prose is clean and vivid, but the characters hard to tell apart. However, it is often hard to judge from an excerpt. The piece of Samuel Delany's, STARS IN MY POCKETS LIKE GRAINS OF SAND, is the longest lecture we've seen since RALPH 124C41 PLUS, or maybe one of the recent Heinlein disasters. There are some good ideas in it, occasional snatches of effective writing, but if the whole book is like this, it's going to be boring. If it isn't, if this is the equivalent of the chapter in MOBY DICK about the whiteness of the whale, then it was not the piece to let stand alone. (Aside: Right after this, I read "Aye, and Gomorrah" for the first time in 12 years, because a friend was trying to convince me it was mindless rubbish. I found it a wonderful story, for all its scientific bloopers. I couldn't believe it was the same writer. The shock was like dipping into "Universe" after a long bout of

I WILL FEAR NO EVIL. Lean, sparse prose, a model of compression . . .)

The best short story is "In Looking-Glass Castle" by Gene Wolfe which, with his usual deftness and sensitivity, almost manages to make a one-sex society work. Men are hunted down and killed, you see. One woman meets one, and finds herself fascinated. Such conditions have apparently prevailed for a long time, so women take it for granted, but it still isn't quite convincing. The level of hatred required to bring such a thing about just isn't there. I'd think that even after a few generations, the society would still be half psychotic.

Ursula LeGuin's "The White Donkey" is a short fable. I won't add much to her reputation, nor will it detract anything. But it also won't show any newcomer why she is such a big deal.

Michael Swamwick's "Ginungagap" is almost a high tech/puzzle story. It lacks focus, as if the author hadn't decided what it was about till halfway through, and really could have used some tightening up. It would be about average for ANALOG.

Craig Strete's "When They Find You" is simply awful, clumsily written, with an expository lump taking up the first third, then awkward Relevance. He has done a lot better. I hope this is a trunk story.

At last, Tom Disch's "The Pressure of Time". This is a rewrite of a story that appeared in ORBIT 7 and part of a forthcoming book of the same title. I didn't manage to finish this, and I gave it a lot of thought. I admire Disch's work vastly. ON WINGS OF SONG was a triumph. CAMP CONCENTRATION was a quantum leap. Most of his short stories are simply marvelous, but I have never managed to finish any of the excerpts from THE PRESSURE OF TIME that I've seen. The material is good (the lives of a mortal minority in an immortal world), and the prose is as polished as ever, but the story doesn't go anywhere, as if Disch never figured out what it is about. Actually, I'm sure he has, but it isn't coming across. Characters, ideas, themes do not develop. There is no discernible plot in any sense of the word. Just an inert lump of words.

Now something like TRIQUARTERLY 49 is presumably a showcase of the State of the Art in Science Fiction. It will reach a lot mainstream academic types who are not familiar with the genre. This disturbs me. The issue contains (in the Budrys article) a sound theoretical base, lots of good writing, but no real innova-

tion, no story which breaks new ground. The best one is Gene Wolfe trying to revive a hoary cliché. It's as if science fiction, with a good understanding of where it had come from, arrived at a crossroads, looked in all directions, and wandered off into a pasture.

(By the way, there's one available back issue of fantasy interest: TRIQUARTERLY 25 is devoted to material by and about Jorge Luis Borges. \$2.40 in what I guess is a clearance sale.)

NIGHT FLIGHTS #1 is actually the fifth issue of MYRDDIN, Lawson Hill's very infrequent little magazine. It contains a lot of poetry, some of it very good, non-fiction about Lewis and Tolkien and three short stories. "Writer's Curse" by Ramsey Campbell tells how a pro writer ends up living the horrors of an amateur's work (and I don't mean he just has to read it!) and manages to create the sense of anti-rational, almost surreal dislocation which is at the core of good horror fiction. It also ends with a snap. My "A Strange Encounter" later became the epilogue to my book, WE ARE ALL LEGENDS. Jessica Salmonson's "The One Great Achievement of Padinre Luil" uses fable format capably enough, but doesn't deliver any particular insight, just weak and obvious irony. Buy the issue for the Campbell and the poetry.

SORCERER'S APPRENTICE is a fantasy gaming magazine, very handsome, professionally produced, with more of interest to non-gamers than most. The fiction is often very good. "The Squire's Tale" by Tanith Lee in the seventh issue is a vivid, erotic tale of medieval witchcraft, quite unlike most sword-and-iron-pants epics you may have read. Highly recommended.

Yuggoth, there's a pile of zines waiting to be reviewed yet! All right, no more introductions. If you have questions, let Geis run them in the lettercol, and I'll answer them there. Avault! Go to! Alack! Gesundheit!



* * *

FANTASY TALES, Stephen Jones, 33 Wren House, Tachbrook Estate, London SM1V 3QD, England; 75 pp. for \$2.50.

TRIQUARTERLY, 1735 Benson Avenue, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60201. \$.95 for issue 49. Subs are 1 year for \$14.00.

NIGHT FLIGHTS Goddemit, Lawson, the address doesn't appear in the damn issue! Fortunately, I have the envelope. 3952 West Dundee Road, Northbrook, IL 60062. \$.50, 4/59.

SORCERER'S APPRENTICE, Flying Buffalo Inc., POB #1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252. \$.25, 6/510.

MORE SMALL PRESS REVIEWS

The third issue of KADATH is entirely devoted to Brian Lumley. His hardcore fans, collectors, and the like will want to send their money off right away, before all copies are sold. The edition is limited to 450.

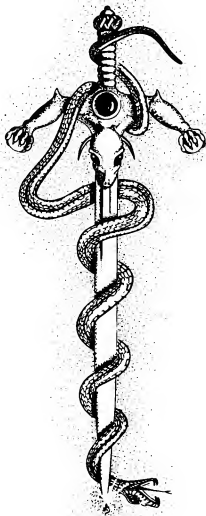
Unquestionably, KADATH is an impressive publication, entirely typeset, on slick paper of NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC grade. When the Old Ones finally take over, I'm sure they'll find copies, yet unmelting. Graphics are fairly good, but not the main attraction. This issue contains three original Lumley stories, one of them a novelet, an interview with Lumley, a bibliography, and a poem. That's just the English section. About 40% is in Italian.

The three stories: "Too Much Monkey Business" is one of those things about the sf writer visited by time travelers (it's often aliens), slight, clever, and nothing more. "The Man Who Got Slotted" is another slickly written, slight story about a haunted slot machine. It would probably seem a lot better if Harlan Ellison's "Pretty Maggie Monkey Eyes" hadn't come first. The big item is "The House of the Temple," a Cthulhu Mythos tale which could have been published in WEIRD TALES in 1938. It's better written than most, not inadvertently funny the way August Derleth's were, but I think you're more likely to smile than shudder when reading it. It's like a homey, nostalgic visit to old friends; after many years they're all the same. The narrator, confined in an asylum, assures us he is not mad. It seems he has inherited his sinister old family estate. Naively he asks, "The curse? My family had... a curse?" All those strange deaths. The pool on the grounds, by the ruined temple. All those forbidden (but amazingly avail-

able) tomes in the late uncle's library.... I need not say more. But I will mention my theory: I think stories like these, all of them so alike, by authors all over the world, are part of a plot by Them to set up a resonating psychic vibration, which when the one billionth person finishes THE SHAMBLER FROM THE SHUDDERER, will rent the universe and let the Great Old Ones back in.

The next issue of KADATH will be devoted to WEIRD TALES, with new stories by Manly Wade Wellman, Warner Munn, etc. \$4 the copy or 4/\$15.00 from Francesco Cova, Corso Aurelio Saffi 5/9, 16128 Genova, ITALY

It's a magazine worth watching. Its production values are good and it pays its contributors well. It could turn into another WHISPER in time.



LETTERS

LETTER FROM POUL ANDERSON
3 Las Palomas
Orinda, CA 94563
11 May 1981

'Barry Malzberg is a nice guy and a fine writer, but I sometimes wonder if we inhabit the same universe. The latest example is his woeful description of the lowly state of science fiction in the fifties and how hopeless and self-hating that made its writers feel.

'Now it's true that times were often lean in the first half of that decade. At one point I went broke and into debt. That, though, was largely because of having invested six months in a project that failed, and didn't seem to be any particular occasion for despair. I got a job, wrote in my spare time, and within a year had paid off the debt, accumulated a small stake, and resumed as a self-employed free lance, which I have been ever since with steadily increasing material success.

The artistic success is for time to judge, not critics. I soon outgrew all desire for their Bandwagonish attention, preferring the freedom of literary disreputability -- a topic which I'd like to take up again in a bit. And, although obviously quality is always subject to statistical fluctuations, I never despised what I was doing. Oh, yes, in the past it was often done hastily, but that was merely because I was young then and didn't know any better. I never came near the prolificity of, say, Robert Silverberg or of Barry himself. Not that it was wrong, much or all of their work is deservedly admired. As time went on, I grew fussier and fussier, therefore slower and slower, with longer and longer intervals between writing sessions, which is probably a normal development in a long career. True, then as now, an occasional piece was written tongue-in-cheek, but this wasn't a matter of self-contempt but of having fun. For me the fifties were, after a few initial difficulties, a vintage decade.

'There would be no point in reciting this if it were exceptional, but the fact is that it applies rather widely, not just to long-recognized writers such as Robert Heinlein but to a large number -- I believe a large majority -- in "my" generation, such as Gordon Dickson, Jack Vance and Frank Herbert. The latter two were always reasonably

well off because they moonlighted at their writing until that ceased to be necessary. None ever pitied himself, suffered noticeable twitches of Angst, sank into existential alcoholism or came to grief in any other fashionable way. Instead, the bunch of us have enjoyed extraordinarily good lives.

'No doubt various critics will reply that this is because we're all coarse, insensitive subliterate, as our writings prove. Nota bene, I do not mean Barry, nor am I trying to be sarcastic. Science fiction has long been so broad and many-dimensioned a field that no one writer of it can possibly please every reader of it: a remark which is a truism unless one is a critic. This variousness is precisely why I and numerous others can continue to work in it and still keep our self-respect. We are under no economic compulsion. Each of us has proved able to operate in quite different fields, and most of us do it yet. However, we like science fiction and the range it offers us.

'Until recently, that range appeared unrestricted. Yes, originally there were certain taboos, but they were of the kind that every competent writer can write his way around, as witness the great Victorians. Much worse were editors who butchered text without troubling to consult the author, but after one or two such experiences a person learned to avoid them, so they weren't important either. Sometimes a doldrum period occurred, when nobody seemed to be doing anything fresh any more, and then we might begin to think seriously about getting out -- but a new breeze always came from somewhere in time to revitalize us.

'Far from feeling cramped, most science fiction writers were apt to take an excessive pride in their freedom, pointing especially to the raft of anti-McCarthy stories that they published in the so-called McCarthy era. (Several of them were mine.) Actually, this was not especially daring; the literary establishment was doing likewise, while some academics found their careers endangered because they contributed to the right-wing National Review. I think the touchstone period was the sixties, when people such as Mr. Heinlein and myself were writing material that flew straight into the teeth of the literary establishment, and getting



well-paid for it, too. Meanwhile, more than once, writers recognized by that establishment were being threatened with professional destruction if they didn't lend their names to the anti-war movement.

'So not until the last few years have I felt the walls closing in on science fiction also, and I hope it's just an illusion. A new requirement has appeared, a great deal more constricting than the simple old ban on explicit copulation and a half-dozen four-letter words. On every matter conceivably connected to race (except white) nationality (except American), creed (except Christian) and sex (except male, unless male homosexual), everybody is supposed to toe the party line, and woe betide whoever does not.

'Mind you, I don't myself want to put anyone down just because that person belongs to any of those groups, and quite agree that certain reforms are long overdue. However, the prohibition sure does restrict my choice of characters, not to mention subjects for the kind of speculation that used to be considered the special business of science fiction. Not that any editor has demanded changes on ideological grounds -- yet -- but this may be simply because I don't want to give gratuitous offense. Nor do I care to lick boots. During the sixties, it didn't hurt to be called a fascist and a warmonger, considering who was doing the calling. Now, though, it's becoming "male chauvinist pig", "racist", and even "anti-Semite", from some of the most unexpected quarters.

'I think this is an ominous sign, but repeat my hope that I'm mistaken or at least that science fiction will retain its traditional independence. If not, if they do start censoring me in earnest, I'll let you know, and then really leave the field while self-respect remains.'

fiction---because of its appeal to youth and the intelligent---has become a new arena for social propaganda...and social taboos.

(We would all like to know more about specifics in this area; it would be useful if those editors and publishers who are into putting restrictions on writers' of themes, characters, locales, etc. would show some guts and put on paper what they object to and what they want...for the guidance of both writers and readers.

((There's not much chance of that kind of honesty, however, so I'll be happy to hear from other writers (anonymously) concerning the unwritten "rules" governing much of the content of science fiction and fantasy today.

((For instance, is the "Feminist Mafia" as powerful in sf as I've heard?))

LETTER FROM A.J. BUDRYS
30 May 1981
824 Seward Street
Evanston, IL 60202

'The thing about Malzberg's ENGINES OF THE NIGHT -- which I've recently had the pleasure of reading complete, in manuscript -- is that Barry's almost consistently wrong on detail but makes it to a viable conclusion nevertheless. An example of this turns up in SFR #39, where he's talking about the short story as being the crucial form in SF. I think he's right about that. Jim Gunn for years has been talking up the novelette, and Malzberg's definition of "short story" doesn't exclude that length, but when you look at the truly pivotal stories in the field, you're in among the "Twilight" and "Coming Attraction" lengths a lot of the time.

'But of all the three "classic" novels Malzberg cites when claiming that almost all of the top novels were expanded or assembled from short stories, only CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ fits. (Furthermore, in the context of Malzberg's entire book, it fits less well than it does in this excerpt, though that hardly matters.) Sturgeon's MORE THAN HUMAN is a triptych whose central portion, "Baby is Three", was a novella. And ROGUE MOON was never, ever, anything but a novel from scratch. The F&SF shorter version was cut into shape from it; no other form ever existed. This is insufficient as either news or criticism to make the heavens fall, but I would like it on record with the SFR audience. The book was conceived in 1958 and launched into with no market in mind and no testing of the waters. What may be in-

teresting about that is an indication that the time had finally arrived when an SF writer could contemplate doing such a thing -- just go out and start a book with sufficient confidence that a market would turn up. This may not sound like such a big deal now, and in all truth I never thought about it one way or the other, but in hindsight it must have been one of the earliest such projects.

'And, while we're at it, as some people know I've been bitching unrelentingly about Knox Burger's refusing to accept either the original title, THE DEATH MACHINE, or either of the two alternates I came up with; discovering it was called ROGUE MOON was a surprise delayed until after I'd returned the untitled galleys to Gold Medal and in due course received six finished copies and a check for \$750 less commission from my agent. But the text was word for word what I'd given them in manuscript, at no time had Burger as much as tentatively suggested any fiddles with it. And in the light of far more recent experience with book editors who don't know any SF but are sure they can improve it -- which Burger certainly was -- that's become a more and more gratifying experience as I look back on it. As I understand the present situation, most contemporary SF writers may even consider it an unbelievable experience. I know I had to keep brushing aside all sorts of helpful suggestions from Berkley/Putnam personnel on MICHAELMAS, until one day Ned Chase, the editor in charge, put a nominal stop to that. They still slipped in some editing after the galleys had supposedly been finalized, which means the Berkley reprint is the only definitive edition, twenty-one corrections later. I don't yearn for a return to the days of the \$1500 advance on three years' work, but maybe the late 1950s-early-60s were The Happy Time.

'Whatever. You're putting out a consistently valuable and interesting publication there, Mr. Geis, and I wish I would get around to responding to it more often.'

((How much purchasing power would fifteen hundred 1955 dollars equal in today's dollars? Six thousand?

((The problem with lower level editorial personnel is that they feel a pressure to do something

to a ms. in order to justify their jobs; there may be an office-politics dynamics involved which rewards those who tamper most---who are perceived as having "contributed most" and have a critical eye---with promotions.))

LETTER FROM SHAWNA MC CARTHY
EDITOR
DAVIS PUBLICATIONS, INC.
380 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10017
May 21, 1981

'Due, in part, to a mixup at our end, some misinformation about SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST has been disseminated. It's not tragically flawed, just a bit confused, but nonetheless, I'd like to say what is the absolute final last word on the subject (for now).

'First, the first issue of SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST will be on sale in the middle of September. Its contents will be: "Swarm, Skimmer" from ACROSS THE SEA OF SUNS, by Gregory Benford; "Asimov on Science Fiction" by Isaac Asimov; "The Pride of Chanur" by C.J. Cherryh; and "Sunwaifs" by Sydney J. Van Scyoc.

'Second, SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST will be bi-monthly, although the bi-months will be a bit long between the first couple issues.

'Third, and most important, it's not entirely true that we'll be dealing only with subsidiary rights directors. Here's what we'll be buying: On hardcovers, we generally will want second serial rights. On paperback originals, generally, we will want first serial rights. On trade paperbacks, we'll want first serial rights, unless a deal has been made for a mass-market follow-up. If there will be a mass-market paperback, we'll take second serial rights on the trade version. Clear? Good. Of course, these are not absolute on-the-pain-of-death rules. If the situation and the book warrants it, we'll revise our stand on any or all of the above statements.

'I suppose, too, that this is an appropriate place to lay to rest whatever misgivings authors might have about what we will "do" to their



work. So: We will not rewrite, we will excerpt. What this means is that an experienced excerpter goes through the work with a pencil and discovers a subplot which will stand alone. This will be extracted from the body of the work and printed, without anything added by us. We will not give away an ending unless the author says it's okay. You may think this is impossible (and I must admit I did too, until I saw the excerpter's work on the first issue), but It Can Be Done.

'So, that's the story, and I hope it helps to clear up any confusion that may have resulted from various and sundry reports and rumors.

((Thanks for the detailed, up-to-date info on SF DIGEST.

((From your description of the process, SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST will not be precisely a digest, and a more accurate title for the magazine might be SCIENCE FICTION EXCERPTS... or CHOICE CUTS.))

LETTER FROM MICHAEL MOORE
MANAGING EDITOR
ARES: THE MAGAZINE OF SCIENCE
FICTION AND FANTASY SIMULATION
Published by SPI, 257 Park Ave.
South, New York, NY, 10010
May 20, 1981

'Elton T. Elliott was almost right when he stated in "The Human Hotline" that ARES has discontinued short stories not directly connected with the issue game. For a time it looked like the rules to the issue games would take up so much room we would have to sacrifice space that the fiction would normally occupy. Add to this fact that most of the fiction received was bad, and it did appear that we would have to drop fiction from the magazine.

'Not so. We have now removed the rules from the magazine and made them into a separate booklet. We now have lots of room for fiction in the magazine. We hope to publish at least two short stories per issue, assuming we receive quality fiction we consider worth using.

'Furthermore, we hope to have a short story or "historical" article in each issue tied directly into the game. To help potential authors develop a story more closely related to the issue game, I have prepared an outline of the content of the issue games for the next year of ARES, including dates when the material is due. This sheet is available (along with a writer's guide) to anyone who sends a SASE to the above address.'

LETTER FROM GEORGE WARREN
853 North Hill
Pasadena, CA, 91104
May 11, 1981

'Do those zillion-dollar advances ever sound fishy to you? Does it ever occur to you that So-and-So might announce that his firm has issued a \$2 million rubber check to So-and-So for his new novel -- and then demand most of it back in kick-backs by prior arrangement, in order to get the free publicity you get from allegedly paying someone all that bread for his book? I wonder ... Mind you, I am not talking specifics. I am not accusing Sagan or his publisher. But I am curious. There have been several very fishy sales recently.

'Schweitzer is very good on Lovecraft and his followers in the current SFR. He explains why it is that the Lovecraft stories on NIGHT GALLERY were such turkeys.'

((I've always liked Darrell's reviewing and respected his perspectives on writing and fantasy. With the ending of the "Short Fiction Reviews" this issue, I'm going to have the space to invite Darrell to lengthen his "Vivisector" column, if he has the time and inclination.))

LETTER FROM GENE WOLFE
Box #69
Barrington, IL, 60010
May 30, 1981

'Number 39 is a very good issue -- I found the interviews with me utterly fascinating. However ...

'The title of the fourth volume of my tetralogy, which is given correctly on page 20 as THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH, is given as THE CITADEL OF THE OTTER on page 62. Unimportant, but it gives me something to write to you about; as does that word tetralogy itself, which seems to be spelled tetralogy every time it appears. You will note that each of these problems derives from a mysterious tendency to substitute O for A and U. As is, of course, the symbol for gold, while O is the symbol for Nothing. Thus the same tendency may be responsible for inflation. I would advise you to look into it.

'On page 24, Neal Wilgus (Neal Wilgus?) asked the sinister to come forth. I came forth already on page 21.

'Like Broce D. Orthors, I too, like Borry Molzberg. (Hey, this is fun!) I particularly like him when he writes in THE ENGINES OF THE NIGHT.

'P.S.: About half the time, you write LeGuin. It is Le Guin.'

((Well, I did look into it, and nothing came of it. Except that we otter be more careful with spelling and proofreading in the future. (Apologies to Ursula. I suppose she, like de Camp and del Rey, have long since become accustomed to all the possible misspellings and misprintings of their names.

CARD FROM ALAN DEAN FOSTER
Box BCI-11
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315
9 May 81

'Point of trivia: the "beautiful black woman" who plays Michael Caine's wife in the hedge-podge film ASHANTI is, in fact, Mrs. Michael Caine in real life. She was/is an internationally-known model (originally from Senegal, I believe).

'Caine seems to be the English equivalent of Burt Reynolds: an actor of some range and sensitivity who is constantly saddled with trivially-written roles which the producers know will make money. The last good work he had a chance to do was in Huston's THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING (fine film, by the way).

'Universal is remaking THE THING by the way.'

((A subscriber chewed me out for making the judgement of her body ('Small tits, great ass') in the review I wrote for SFR #39. Said I was crude and sexist and like that. Well, hell, she was presented to the audience as a body, so I felt like rating the body. Maybe if I'd said 'small breasts, great rear'? Am I too prone to the vulgate do you think? Shit, no!))

LETTER FROM HARLAN ELLISON
3484 Coy Drive
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
6 May 81

'Panic! Confusion reigns! I am whelmed, definitely whelmed; neither over -- nor under --; simply whelmed outta my mind.

'On page 11 of the July 1981 issue of AMAZING, Tom Stclair says of

me humble middle self: "a writer who has never been content to make the safe moves or seek the secure position".

'On page 36 of the Summer 1981 issue of SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW (received the same day as the AMAZING noted above), Bruce D. Arthurs says: "(Ellison) reached a peak in his writing, I feel, about five or six years ago, and I haven't found anything new in his work in any of the things I've read since then. It's still good, still marvelously intense gut-level writing, but he seems to have settled into a niche in which he may be one of the best, but isn't challenging himself to strike out into new niches".

'Setting aside for a moment the compliments contained in each of these assessments, for which I am grateful, I looked back over what I've written in these last six years. The works include such fictions as "Croatoan", "Hitler Painted Roses", "Seeing", "The Diagnosis of Dr. D'arqueAngel", "From A To Z in the Chocolate Alphabet", "Jeffy is Five", the full novel version of "A Boy and His Dog" titled BLOOD'S A ROVER, "The Man Who was Heavily into Revenge", "All the Lies that are My Life", "Count the Clock that Tells the Time", "All the Birds Come Home to Roost", "Shatterday", "Grail", "Django", "Broken Glass", "Opium" and "In the Fourth Year of the War". These, in addition to several dozen non-fiction pieces such as my columns in FUTURE LIFE and my essay on gun control and the death of John Lennon in a recent HEAVY METAL.

I don't suppose it does any good to say that the writing of some of these -- particularly "All the Birds Come Home to Roost" and "All the Lies that are My Life" -- were enormously difficult and seemed to me to be, at least as far as my oeuvre is concerned, serious departures ... conscious efforts to "strike out into new niches," whatever that means. I was reaching. Stagnation, like plagiarism, is something every writer fears. If Mr. Arthurs is correctly perceiving that I've peaked and have been coasting for at least six years, then I'm in deep trouble.

'But I must admit that his words, in juxtaposition with Mr. Staicar's, have me whelmed as I have not been whelmed since, on the same day about six years ago, I received two reviews from two different sources, one of which referred to me as "the perennially angry young punk of the biz-arré" and the other which opined "Ellison is getting a little long in the tooth to be called the enfant terrible of fantasy".

'What is an insecure, looking-to-his-betters-for-evaluation writ-

er to do? Like Jeffy, I seem locked, in the minds of some, in a never-ending childhood; while to others I am far over the hill and should only be worrying whether my rocking chair faces toward the sun, or away from the sun.

'If other writers out there feel the bite of the same dichotomy, I would appreciate their comments. Or at least references for acceptable nursing homes and/or kindergartens where a weary old, snappishly young, long-toothed and adolescent scrivener can go to wait out his second childhood or his twilight years ... whichever comes first.

'Exhausted, but exuberantly,

-- HARLAN ELLISON

((I think you don't need to stew in your insecurity juices until all the reviewers and critics agree that you are the greatest writer since Shakespeare. Then panic!))

CARD FROM ROBERT BLOCH
2111 Sunset Crest Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90046
May 6, 1981

'Dear REG: Postcards from me are quite common, and often even vulgar. So is Bob Tucker. Personally, I can see no reason to save them; as for Tucker, he is beyond saving. I have just returned from Australia, where I made a valiant attempt to clean up the mess he left behind during his visit in '75. There are a dozen kangaroos in the Sydney zoo with Tucker-like faces, and in Melbourne I heard a few misguided fans still yelling "Smooth!" as they downed their drinks of Coca-Cola. At my recommendation the Australians intend to bring Harlan Ellison over next year where he will tell them all about sci-fi. By the way, the new SFR is a thing of beauty and a joy forever; it makes most 'zines look like turkeys. Hoping you are the same...'

((Yes, here I sit, gobbling up your praise, trying to keep my place in the pecking order while studiously ignoring the roasting (in Hell) I am no doubt destined for.))



CARD FROM HARRY J.N. ANDRUSCHAK
POB #606
La Canada-Flintridge, CA 91011
May, 1981

'I regret to inform you that Janie Lamb died on 6 May from a stroke suffered on 2 May, from which she never regained consciousness. As the long-time Secretary-Treasurer of the NFFF, she was loved by all who knew her.

'Don Franson, 6543 Babcock Avenue, North Hollywood, CA, 91606 will take over her duties for the next few months. ((Dues are \$6.00 a year, going up to \$8.00 soon)).

'Come to think of it ... you probably knew her well before I did, or many in fandom did. She was 73 last April. Too young.'

((Yes, I was saddened by the news of Janie's death. The tragedy of her home burning to the ground earlier in the year must have contributed enormously to her death. All those books, fanzines, memories...))

((I first met her when I joined the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F) in those days) some time in the early Fifties. I didn't stay long, but I remember she loved helping young, beginning fans. She is no doubt now explaining fandom to some doubting angels and showing them how to use a hectograph.))

LETTER FROM SHELDON TEITELBAUM
Rohov Mordecai Anelevitch 23/2
Holon, Israel
May, 1981

'A recent letter from Norman Spinrad printed in SFR #37 informs that Israel and Taiwan are current havens for SF piracy. We are glad to report that this type of thing seems to be on the wane here anyway. The books in question were horribly translated and packaged in the worst pulpish manner you can imagine. There were never more than two or three of the little monsters available, and have all apparently rung down the curtain and joined the choir invisible. While I share Mr. Spinrad's concern for this kind of theft, the problem never reached epidemic proportions in Israel.

'ISRACON 81, the first ever SF con to be held in Israel took place on 24/3/81 at the Haddassah Medical Faculty Building in Eyn-Karem, Jerusalem, and was surprisingly successful. Although it only ran for one day, it attracted 2500 paying members, which was far beyond what we expected. Given the kind and gener-

ous offers of help proffered by Mr. Spinrad and Harry Harrison, we believe that JERUCON 82 will put Israel on the SF map.

'May I announce having assumed the position of Assistant Editor to FANTAZIA 2000, the only prozine in Israel. While it is true that most of our short fiction comes to us by way of agreement with F&SF, our science and book review articles are firmly in the hands of Israelis, and we have even salvaged some of the less dubious efforts from our very own slush pile for publication. The magazine by the way is not a pulp job, but rather a large format, heavily illustrated glossy. While not surpassing the 10,000 mark in sales, the magazine is quietly holding its own into the third year of publication. None of us are making any money out of it, to be sure. Aharon Hauptman, the editor, is teaching computer science at TelAviv University to get by, his wife and coeditor Zippi is practicing law, and I'm working time and a half as an officer in the paratroops.'

CARD FROM JACK L. CHALKER

4704 Warner Drive
Manchester, MD 21102
March, 1981

'Sorry, have to be brief now, but two items on my "Voice of the Whale" thing on SFWA. First, I want to apologize to George Hay and Tom Clareson, two really nice guys, for my using them as examples of academia. Nothing personal was meant or intended, and particularly in Hay's case I should have used a far different name, as his SF taste is extremely good.

'Second, as regards Priest's reply to Jerry and me, I think our arguments hold. What does Priest respond? "It's just what I would have expected". Some intellectual argument! Some refutation! Such a comment is much the equivalent of a little child's "Because" and its usage in refutation here, I think, can only show how right we were.

'If Jerry and I are wrong, we are willing to listen, and neither of us will answer "It's just what I would have expected" or "Because". When we remember that the attacker's business is words, and this is all he can muster, I stand on my discussion. All best.'

((New readers and subscribers who are baffled by Jack's letter should read Christopher Priest's article,

"Outside the Whale" (SFR #36) and "Inside the Whale" by Jack Williamson, Jerry Pournelle, and Jack Chalker (SFR #37). The "Whale" is in the Science Fiction Writers of America, aka SFWA.))

LETTER FROM DAVID LANGFORD

22 Northumberland Avenue
Reading, Berkshire
RG2 7PN United Kingdom
27 March 81

'I know what Chris Priest means when he grumbles about SFWA efficiency. As a full member, I do find it a tiny bit disconcerting to discover myself mysteriously struck off the mailing list for the Nebula reports (this happened around last autumn), to find that the preliminary Nebula ballot and the motion concerning an Overseas Director have gone by without my knowing about them, and to learn about the Nebula shortlist from LOCUS rather than SFWA ... I hear a rumour to the effect that US sponsors of the Overseas Region concept have been worrying about lack of support from apathetic overseas members. Possibly, as in my case, apathy isn't always the reason for such members' failure to vote?

'Quite a number of copies of ANDROMEDA 2 with your story (and with mine) have been remaindered over here in the last few months. Nasty remainders, with deep buzzsaw cuts into the paper ... but if you want a couple, let me know and I'll see if I can find some. (Going rate is 30p each... say 70¢?) As a matter of fact I'm flogging a few copies for the TAFF fund and am trying to get them signed for that purpose--if you'd like to scrawl your name a couple of times at the bottom of any reply you may send, I can cut out the signatures for tipping-in to the books! (I promise not to type contracts or confessions over the signatures if you can help me here ...) I presume that you didn't get the hardback edition of ANDROMEDA 2 from Dobson? I had to buy one, second hand, thank goodness; Peter Weston seemed wholly incapable of arranging free copies. Dobson Books are something of a bum firm: Last year they placed absolute bottom in the Society of Authors poll on what authors thought of their publishers (ex-Dobson author "Richard Cowper" was showing this poll around and chortling a lot at the UK Milford last year), and the latest issue of the Society of Authors journal, THE AUTHOR, lists Dobson on the "sicklist":

"A member has reported that she has received no royalty statements for the past four years and that the company entirely fails to deal with correspondence. This latter complaint is confirmed by the experience of other members of the Society."

'One friendly editor points out to me that theoretically I could bill Futura Books for the copy of ANDROMEDA 2 I had to buy, because of course the contract says they'll provide such copies. I'm tempted...

'And the mag NEW STATESMAN has been publishing illicitly-acquired Home Office plans in the event of nuclear attack on Britain. It's easy to see they understand the magnitude of the calamity:

"A large-scale nuclear attack on this country would completely disrupt the banking system on which the whole monetary economy is based."

'And the relaunch of money is a top-priority matter for after the holocaust. Hoping you are the same ... all best wishes.'

((Actually, after emergency food, shelter and medical care is set up, re-establishing the money system is the next priority. For lack of the ability to buy and sell and save, people would quickly sink to savagery and civilization would die.))

LETTER FROM RONALD R LAMBERT

2350 Virginia, Troy, MI 48084
May 13, 1981

'At this writing I still have not heard from Sontow Sucharitkul or SFWA concerning my membership application which I sent in a year ago. A friend of mine confronted Sucharitkul at the Nebula and asked about it. Sucharitkul then produced proofs for the new SFWA Directory to show my name was in it. My friend said, "That's fine, Sontow, but does Ron Lambert know about it? Has he received a membership card? Has he begun receiving the SFWA BULLETIN or FORUM? Has he heard from you at all?" No reply.

'My friend then went to Norman Spinrad with this complaint. Spinrad reportedly groaned and said that I would have to get in a long line if I wanted to chew out a piece of Sucharitkul's hide.

'In view of this, I find it hard to understand how it is that Sucharitkul could run for re-election unopposed! I am also wondering how

effective SFWA could possibly be with a figurehead secretary. This is a professional organization?

'You asked me what they do to malcontents nowadays. That caused me some concern for a while. It had not occurred to me before you brought it up that I might be asking for trouble by noising around my complaints. I began looking over my shoulder all the time, wondering when the SFWA goon squad would come and break my legs. But as time passed and they did not come, I wondered what was wrong. What were they waiting for? Then in a moment of wonderful illumination it came to me: Obviously, they were waiting for Sucharitkul to give them my address! No sweat, man!'

LETTER FROM RONALD R. LAMBERT

2350 Virginia
Troy, MI 48084
June 17, 1981

'Here is yet another installment in the continuing saga of my epic struggle to get a response from Sucharitkul to my application for membership in SFWA: Finally, I heard from someone! -- But not from Sucharitkul. Knowing that the universe is a strange place and that sometimes you have to be strange in order to cope, I took a deliberate wild shot and addressed a letter to Sucharitkul in care of a former editor of the SFWA BULLETIN, whose address I saw in a fanzine somewhere. The letter was forwarded to Peter D. Pautz, Executive Secretary of SFWA. He wrote to me immediately, and his competent professionalism and manifest decency as a person were truly refreshing. With profuse apologies, he sent me back issues of the FORUM, a copy of the bylaws and a copy of the new directory (which I read and behold, does contain my name). He also said he had told the present BULLETIN editor to send me issues, and said he had talked to Sucharitkul.

'He also suggested that perhaps I had submitted my application for membership to the wrong address. When I set him straight on that, and told him I had even recently sent Sucharitkul a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a plea that he communicate with me in some way (without response), and told him about a friend of mine who lives near Sucharitkul telephoning him repeatedly about me and even confronting him at the Nebulas (always to be put off with lame excuses and the assurance that the materials would be in the mail to me "real soon now"), he called Sucharitkul again to talk to him quite sternly. Sucharitkul, according to Pautz, said that he had tried to run my name into the computer, but for some

reason it did not come out, and he failed to notice this for "weeks". (Please note that it was exactly one full year ago as of yesterday that I sent in my membership application.)

'Unfortunately, this saga is not ended yet. I still have not heard from Sucharitkul, despite his promises to Pautz. It seems that I can only get my membership card from him, so I guess for the time being I will have to carry around my copy of the directory to prove to people that I am a member of SFWA. Stay tuned for the next exciting episode!'

((To be frank, Ron, this long-running struggle of yours has become a drag. Will someone in SFWA with some clout please get a membership number to this poor man?))

LETTER FROM GREGORY BENFORD

1105 Skyline Drive,
Laguna Beach, CA, 92651
March 19, 1981

'My diary looks neat and orderly (even though my life does not) in SFR. Much better than the sloppy ms., which as you saw was sent in as is, no rewriting, no planning, just a chunk of life. Rereading it, I was struck by how much I'd forgotten. No wonder the years blur -- hell, the weeks fog up!

'A few bringings-up-to-date: The paper for PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS was accepted without even small changes asked for. Keith Kato is now in his final round of experiments for his thesis; it promises to be a nice piece of work. The short story, "Exposures", my agent sold to Scithers for ASIMOV'S. I think it's my best short piece in some time, and it's probably going to be out of place in that magazine, being somewhat thoughty and not action-filled. The riddle of NGC 1097 remains: nobody's been able to come up with a plausible model for what those huge, luminous jets coming out of an otherwise ordinary galaxy might be. The short story, "Slices", sold to Jim Baen for DESTINIES just before the gates closed. The dustup over Timescape Books etc. has been documented as well as possible in LOCUS, but in this diary you see an early, simple stage of the whole thing. Since May, 1980, the whole issue of charged particle weapons has exploded through the defense community and the media; I've talked to technical types and gotten vibrations from distant citadels (including the CIA...), but there's no big news. And the novel I was working on then

is nearly finished, and titled ACROSS THE SEA OF SUNS. I wrote a novella, "Swarm, Skimmer", which will eventually appear in the novel, but will first be in the opening issue of SF DIGEST.

'I've gotten letters from several souls about the diary, some saying they'll take it up. I do recommend it for clearing the air, keeping track, etc. But I don't expect to do it again; no time!

'Good issue of SFR as usual. Malberg is right about Campbell's influence. After looking over his list I realized that I, too, didn't sell anything to Campbell, and despite being a "hard science" writer, didn't have anything in ANALOG until (I think) 1974 -- and that was a decidedly odd piece, no science at all, called "Doing Lennon" (about this guy who kills Lennon and takes his place ...).'

LETTER FROM RICHARD TORONTO

EDITOR OF SHAVERTON, "THE ONLY SOURCE OF POST-DELUGE SHAVERANIA",
309 Coghlan Street, Vallejo, CA 94590
March, 1981

'I thought that possibly you or your readers might be able to help me out in my predicament.

'I am currently editor of the world's only on-going zine dedicated to the continued exploration of the Shaver Mystery. We were founded in 1979, four years after the death of Richard S. Shaver.

'Our purpose is manyfold: to update the Mystery; keep old SM fen together and foster new fen; to look at new events in light of the Shaverian worldview; to keep the SM alive and kicking so that in the not-too-distant future, some of his works will be reprinted; and last but not least, to find those who may know something about the life of Richard Shaver they wish to share with us and our readers.

'The latter purpose is very important to me, and is why I am asking for help. I am trying to piece together one of the most documented biographies on Shaver's life that has yet been accomplished. Many obscure sci-fi writers like Shaver, will be lost to the world unless something is done NOW to collect material about their lives. The people who knew Shaver have all but vanished or died or simply clammed up... and time passes and more info is lost down the drain of total obscurity. This historical (especially

biographical) info will someday be valued by all of fandom, even though it is not thought much of now. With each passing year, the data becomes harder to come by.

'So, please . . . anyone having something that they feel could be of interest to readers of a NEW bio on Shaver, feel free to write to me. And all leads on information would be most appreciated. I am also trying to locate Shaver's only daughter, Evelyn. If anyone knows of her whereabouts, I would be most grateful in hearing about it.'

LETTER FROM JOHN SHIRLEY
C/O Rob't Cornfield
667 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10021.
June 8, 1981

'I feel I must set the record straight, though most of you could not care less, with respect to Steve Brown's well-meant corrections of Elton Elliott's news item about me.

'John Hammond told me he was going to sign me, but he told me it would take a few months, as he was in the process of legalizing his new record company, arranging backing and so forth. A few months after my meeting with him I wrote and said, "Well?" and he replied, "I believe in you and I will not forsake you". Oddly Biblical style. But still no contract. So I got fed up and accepted a contract from Jean Luc Beson, enslaving myself for three years to Dorian Records, a French production company. The first lp will be on the Dorian label, distributed in the USA by Celluloid Records. Dorian is a successful European label; we are their first American band; The band is called "Obsession".

'I have, Steve, have sold CELLARS. To Avon. Long ago. The book is complete. Steve gives the impression that I ladled everything nasty and twisted I could think of onto the narrative, but no, no, the book is more artfully put together than that.

'It's true, however, that there are some scenes which were so . . . well, so horrifying to me that I had to get up from the typewriter and retch -- this actually happened twice before I completed them. No, wise guys, I was not retching at the quality of the writing. . . CELLARS is to be my last paperback original. No more for me. They disappear from the racks like a puff of smoke in the wind from the supermarket's automatic sliding door. I am writing NO SF, but after I finish the "mainstream" novel I am currently writing I may do another borderline fantasy.

'I'm going to France soon for more recording sessions, and to join my fiancée, a French woman who has done much to endear Paris to me.'

((There are many purists who will say you NEVER wrote science fiction, but a kind of warped fantasy with occasional pieces of sf furniture to decorate the rooms.

((Good luck in Paris; the European experience should give your writing greater variety and depth.))

LETTER FROM ROBERT A.W. LOWMEDES
717 Willow Avenue
Hoboken, NJ 07030
June 9, 1981

'A couple of items in your excellent Summer 1981 issue were just what was needed to bring me out of my usual lethargy to the point of writing a comment.

'All thanks for the continuing excerpts from "The Engines of the Night". While I have long admired Barry N. Malzberg's skill as a writer (no small matter in these semi-illiterate days!) I haven't seen much by him wherein the subject matter was of much interest to me. (That is my failing, not his!) The present material is a glorious exception, and I shall be looking forward to the book's appearance. Here is something I can reread with growing appreciation.

'There is, however, one slight error: he mentions Fred Pohl having persuaded Damon Knight to come East, back in the 40s. Now, it may be that Fred did have a part in that, but it was Don Wollheim, John B. Michel and myself who did the main work, offering Damon a berth in one of our Futurian apartments where he could be among friends and colleagues at a minimum of expense while he made his way into the business. (He started out as an illustrator but was writing fiction not long after.) Damon, John and I shared quarters in a large apartment on West 103rd Street, near Columbus Avenue, from the summer of 1941, right after the Denver Convention, to some time in 1942 when that particular arrangement broke up.

'The other item is Darrell Schweitzer's brief but pointed essay on "aborted beginnings" in horror fiction. That hits the nail squarely, I'd say -- and I'm by no means sure that some of my own early attempts at horror fiction, heavily under HPL's influence as they were, didn't have the same fault. I'm sure that some of the unpublished ones did, anyway.

'While I still find "At the Mountains of Madness" good Lovecraft, despite all, there's no question but that it does have the fault Schweitzer describes. For my taste, the sweep of it -- abortive as it may be when you've come to the final paragraph -- redeems the fault sufficiently to make it worth re-reading. But I certainly would not recommend it as a starter for anyone who hadn't read any Lovecraft but was interested in trying.

'There's one sentence, however, that inspired some research resulting in this letter: "It is the only aborted beginning in existence long enough to have been serialized -- abridged, no less -- in three parts in ASTOUNDING".

'I read the story when it first appeared, and later that year (1936) when I first became acquainted with Don Wollheim, who was corresponding with H.P. Lovecraft at the time, learned from Don that Lovecraft was greatly upset by the cuts that Tremaine had made and considered the story as still unpublished. Later, others told me that the deletions didn't amount to very much.

'I reread it, of course, when the Arkham House volume reprinting came out, and couldn't see much difference. By then, I no longer had those copies of ASTOUNDING STORIES (February, March, April, 1936) so there was no way of comparing and seeing for myself. And when I finally had both versions on hand, a mental note to do it got mislaid.

'Until this last weekend, when I took out the magazines, and the Arkham House version and made a quick scan. By a "quick scan" I mean a sentence-by-sentence comparison, checking both the openings and the endings of each sentence, and getting the feel of the length of the sentences. In that way, if any sentences are missing, I'll catch them; if the first or second half of a long sentence has been cut, or a big chunk taken out of the middle, I'd notice. But I wouldn't necessarily notice tiny cuts within sentences.

'Now and then in the process, I couldn't help noticing that Tremaine had, at times, changed words and punctuation, deleted words, or added words. That happened often enough to satisfy me that a word-by-word comparison (which I wouldn't make unless handsomely paid to do it!) would show many more instances.

'Yes, there are cuts. Here's a list of them:

'I didn't notice anything except changes as described above in the first installment. It became different when I came to Chapter IX, which opens the second installment.

'Chapter IX: 1/2 sentence cut, followed by 2 sentences omitted entirely. That was all I noticed in the second installment and I wondered if that was what all the shouting was about. Then, of course, we come to the final installment.

'Chapter IX: Five sentences deleted. Chapter X: 1/2 sentence cut; four sentences omitted, 1/2 sentence cut, another omitted.

'Chapter XI: Five sentences cut, the last part of one paragraph and the opening of the next; four sentences deleted; one sentence cut; 1/2 sentence cut, 1/2 sentence cut; one sentence cut, etc. At that point, I stopped noting as we were practically at the end -- there were a couple more instances, however. But we had enough to know where we stand.

'If all the cut sentences and the deleted sentences were restored, the ASTOUNDING version would have been about one page longer -- or a little over one page, but surely not two pages.

'No: you really cannot call that version abridged.

'However, that plus the little word changes, punctuation changes, breaking long sentences into shorter ones, were surely enough to annoy any author. I read such passages word for word and could not find any instances where the word changes seemed to be an improvement. Some of them were harmless enough, but in quite a number of instances the substitutions were less good.

'We know that Lovecraft did not approve of editorial "emendations", as he put it, and those word-changes were exactly what he was talking about. However, there is something much worse: the paraphrasing. H.P. Lovecraft's paragraphs tend to be long, although not all of them go to great length. What Tremaine did was mechanically to break up all of the longish paragraphs into several short ones. Lovecraft's effective and well-thought-out paraphrasing is gone entirely and we are left with the inept type of paraphrasing which one finds in the Warner Van Lorne stories.

'That is a real atrocity, far more damaging to the story than the finicky emendations, the cuts and deletions. (None of the cuts or deletions deprive the reader of any significant or necessary information; in most instances, what we have lost has been a repetition or yet another reference to one of H.P. Lovecraft's weird locals -- Leng, etc. -- the very mention of which is supposed to bring a shudder to the reader. The difficulty with that is that the reader is supposed to have

read H.P. Lovecraft's other stories and built up a cooperative reaction to such buzz words, just as -- to use the same parallel that Schweitzer does -- Ezra Pound drops in a word or phrase in the final cantos which is supposed to do the work of the details he has presented in the earlier ones. Well, as I know from my own experience, you can get a lot of mileage that way providing that your reader is well-trained and eager to play the game.)

'I haven't the stomach to compare the ASTOUNDING version of "The Shadow Out of Time" with the Arkham House version, but I think it reasonable to assume the same sort of mistreatment in the magazine version.

'Obviously, Tremaine's excuse for the paraphrasing would be that not breaking them up would have resulted in innumerable column-long (or nearly column-long) blocks of type what would make it difficult for the average pulp-magazine reader to wade through. I can see some sense in dividing some of the longest paragraphs into two -- but not the deadly succession of tiny ones that you find in the magazine edition. So, all in all, Lovecraft had sound reason to feel that his story had been ruined in publication. I myself, didn't see anything terribly wrong when I first read it in 1936, although I never did like nothing but short paragraphs; the mood and imagery of the tale does come through in spite of it all -- and, of course, there were many complaints about H.P. Lovecraft's verbosity and slow-motion, even so.

'Whether skilled cutting would improve the story remains moot. The fault Schweitzer refers to would still be there, and it might be that it just wouldn't work at all if the excesses were trimmed off. In his book, THE WORLD OF SCIENCE FICTION, 1926-1976, Lester del Rey mentions trying to rewrite "The Skylark of Space", eliminating E.E. Smith's characteristic literary faults and found that it didn't make a better story; it just turned a flawed but exciting tale into a dull one.'

((I suspect Lovecraft may be now in the AmericanLit. textbooks---stuffed and erect, on display---with the result that no one will read him again except under forced assignment in college or high school.

((I suspect TV and movies have trained generations of readers to expect and demand the quick scene, the sharp climax, the snappy dialog, the swift background setting.

((The slow, Victorian style of writing, the indirection, the gentle revelation....these are not "commer-

cial" and are not wanted by editors or readers.

((The fast scene, the direct, to-the-point dialog, the sketchy characterization and background---are easier to write, and I imagine require less genuine writing talent and merely more technical skills.

((Would Lovecraft be published today....as an unknown?

((Thanks for writing, Bob, and for making the distinctions and observations in your letter. We don't hear from you often enough.))

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OTHER VOICES

THE BREAKING OF NORTHWALL

By Paul O. Williams
Ballantine/Del Rey, 1980, 280 pp.
\$2.25

REVIEWED BY DEAN R. LAMBE

A thousand years after the "time of fire" laid waste to the North American continent, Jestak of the Pelbar people becomes the key figure in the slow return of unified civilization. The conservative Pelbar live in walled city-states on the upper reaches of the Heart (Mississippi) River, and conduct an uneasy trade with surrounding nomadic tribes, the Sentani and the Shumai. When young Jestak returns two years late from a mission to fabled Eastern cities, he is punished by his own city and sent to Northwall. Sina Pall, Protector of Northwall, extracts Jestak's amazing story of contact with unknown tribes, and -- for devious political reasons -- Sina approves Jestak's odyssey of peace and unification among the Middle American tribes. Jestak has a more personal goal in his search for an enslaved Shumai woman, but when Jestak and his new allies return to Northwall, they find the near-impregnable city under attack.

While a very ambitious exercise in speculative anthropology, a "the times make the man" future history, this novel fails to convince. The oft-turgid prose, especially in the battle scenes, does not convey much sense of action. The tribe that re-discovers gunpowder seems an unlikely choice, and the disparity of weaponry among neighboring tribes does not fit well with preserved English literacy. Perhaps Williams has modeled this emergence from a second Dark Ages too closely on the first such period, and in so doing he has combined too many historical eras in far too short a time.

THE ART OF THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Edited by Deborah Kalb, Text by Vic Bulluck and Valérie Hoffman
Ballantine, \$15.95 (\$18.95 in Canada)
176 pp., 1981, illustrated

REVIEWED BY JOHN DIPRETE

This is a fascinating look at the world of special effects from George Lucas' THE EMPIRE STRIKES

BACK. The various methods of animation, rotoscoping, bluescreening and other complicated production techniques are discussed and behind-the-scenes insights given into the entire cinematic procedure.

The large-size softcover measures a whopping 9" x 12" and costs a hefty \$15.95 (\$18.95 in Canada). The book contains countless color matte paintings, production sketches, stills and photographs. Recommended for the STAR WARS and THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK enthusiasts.

TOWERS AT THE EDGE OF A WORLD

By Virgil Burnett
St. Martin's Press, NY, 208 pp.

REVIEWED BY DOUGLAS BARBOUR

TOWERS AT THE EDGE OF A WORLD is a truly marvelous book as well as a book of the truly marvelous. Although he has published stories in such varied places as HARPER'S, CHICAGO REVIEW, TRIQUARTERLY and PENTHOUSE, Virgil Burnett will not be known to most readers of SF & F. A professor of Fine Arts at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, he has, it is obvious, waited to give us his first book until he honed his craft to the finest edge possible.

Subtitled "Tales of a Medieval Town", TOWERS AT THE EDGE OF A WORLD is a series of exquisite formalist fables set in a universe just slightly askew from the historical Europe we know. Montarnis, a "high town in some fantasy France", becomes the central character of this chronicle much as the castle of Gormenghast does in Mervyn Peake's great trilogy. Each individual story comes from a particular time in Montarnis's history, from the Dark Ages to the present day; only the town, always changing but somehow always the same, on top of the plateau where its buildings accumulate and crumble through the ages, remains the still centre from which a variety of strange individuals emerge to shine briefly before fading into the eternal dark. Montarnis only exists, then, in the writer's imagination, but ah, with what authority do its history and legends come to life there! And it is a long history, full of legends.



Whether he is telling us of the bold knight Gmdegard, who loved to kill and was eventually slain by a dragon during the Dark Ages, or of the monks who succumbed to the Black Death (all but Gerardus, the contemplative copyist of the Bible), of Lady Constance and her high-born lover, who used to dance on the heads of rats, killing them in the midst of their pleasures, or of Djaa, the Amazon from the Orient who welded together an army of women to raid and plunder in the valley, of the modern artist Vliet, who dies in ecstasy in Fausta's embrace or the American woman Julie, who slips off to make mad love to a circus clown almost under her husband's eyes, Burnett presents his tales in a prose so pure they take on an almost iconographic perfection. Indeed, they remind me of nothing so much as X-rated Grimm's Fairy Tales.

It should be obvious by now that the women of Montarnis are powerful, indeed. Like Kali, they are mysterious and potent creatures who dance the eternal dance of creation and destruction around their men. The men seldom escape unscathed. Gerardus is one of the few men who does and he lives entirely apart from women. The rest of the men tend to come to bad ends, partly because they are in love with brute power, while the women survive and even increase in power. For one thing, they know and acknowledge the power of sex for what it is and do not, as the men so often do, try to turn it into other realms, like war or politics or even art.

TOWERS AT THE EDGE OF A WORLD is not your average fantasy. In their pristine stylishness and their moods of mixed violence and eroticism, these tales are archetypically decadent. There's a touch of what Gene Wolfe achieved in THE DEVIL IN

THE FOREST, and I believe Wolfe would really enjoy this book. Like Burnett's exquisitely alluring and frightening illustrations to each tale (which are both uniquely his and reminiscent of the flavour of Aubrey Beardsley's drawings, and which any SF illustrator could ponder and learn much from), they insist upon their own inviolable "reality". Brilliantly focused dreams, they are "about" nothing; their rich oniric textures are their own excuse.

Do not read TOWERS AT THE EDGE OF A WORLD if your idea of fantasy is Conan the Barbarian, but it you enjoy fine writing, superb observation, ritualistic and mythic overtones, and the cool and cutting play of irony Michael Moorcock mastered in GLORIANA, I predict you will find Virgil Burnett's book a rare delight. Oscar Wilde would have loved this book, I think; I know I do.

THE ANDROIDS ARE COMING

Edited by Robert Silverberg
Elsevier/Nelson, 183 pp., 1980, \$7.95

REVIEWED BY JOHN DIPRETE

This seven-author android anthology, edited by Robert Silverberg, features such stories as the classic, "Fondly Fahrenheit" by Alfred Bester -- an exciting, crazy and fast-paced yarn, originally a selection from THE SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME (Volume One). It's a tale of psychotic android antics, furiously action-packed, a madcap blend of various insanities.

The volume's first tale, "The Captain's Dog", by E.C. Tubb (1958) hasn't aged well, as the soggy theme, "Androids are People, Too!" indicates. A talky, juvenile and maudlin melodrama, the plot is practically nil, but, on the plus side, E.C. Tubb writes deftly (stylistic tendrils of description energize his

prose), and characters change and develop interestingly. A moral realization, and tragic denouement, mark this tale, but there's no real story -- just trite dialogue and scarce, tacked-on action.

Simak's "Good Night, Mr. James" features a cyclonic set of circumstances -- involving elements of stealth, cunning and trickery, and a man-alien "cat and mouse" chase. Smooth reading, sharp description, along with suspense and other ingredients stir up this thriller of dread and darkness. Simak's aliens, known as puddles, display a nicely-etched, alien feel; the creatures' down-home creepiness and racial consciousness exceed our own psychotic natures. As a matter of survival, they repel, attack and out-trick the Enemy by a kind of emotional skunk-scent. Strangely inspiring. Characterization lacks here -- unless a duplicate who is literally born yesterday, and whose destiny is cloned, qualifies as a real character. The story entertains, however.

Although several reprints included here may be dated, or juvenile, or simply ill-done, none are total failures -- about half or so actually sparkle. The volume seems a safe, adventuresome sport for juveniles, and well-written and pretty average for grown-ups. Also, if you're new to SF, it's a safe bet.

STARLOG PHOTO GUIDEBOOK TO SCIENCE FICTION TOYS & MODELS, VOLUME I

By Stephen J. Sansweet
Starlog Press, NY, 1980
32 pages plus covers, \$3.95, paper

REVIEWED BY SUE BECKMAN

If your heart skips a beat at the sight of a 1936 mint-condition Buck Rogers XZ-44 Liquid Helium Matter Pistol, and if you'd sell your soul for a Robby the Robot battery-powered Space Patrol Vehicle, then



you're an incurable collector, and you'll love this book. If not, consider yourself (and your pocketbook) lucky and get the book anyway. Even non-collectors will get a kick out of photo-tripping through the '30s and '40s, when less than a dollar (or a few Cream of Wheat labels) could buy a wonderfully well-made, all-metal toy. These same toys, if well-kept, now bring hundreds at auctions. This book is not a price guide, but on the last page, the author notes that a fairly ordinary tin astronaut from the '50s recently sold for \$1,050. (If only your mom had not tossed out that Official Tom Corbett Space Gun when you left for college.)

In the '50s and '60s when U.S. manufacturers had shifted to plastic, Japanese toy-makers were turning tin cans discarded by American occupation forces into some of the most imaginative (and comical!) robots and space vehicles of all. There were robots that smoked, laughed, drove tractors, or showed moving pictures in their chests -- all with flashing lights and annoying sounds. Today, Japan, too, has gone plastic, leaving Mainland China to carry on the mostly-metal space toys characteristic of the '50s.

The first half of the book covers toys with movie or television tie-ins: Buck Rogers, Flash Gordon, Captain Video ("Master of Space! Hero of Science! Captain of the Video Rangers!" -- remember?), LOST IN SPACE, STAR TREK, STAR WARS and many others. The second half presents toys manufactured in response to the general increase of interest in space, robots and UFOs after 1950. There are small sections on Mattel and Disney and fifteen pages on "Japan: The Golden Age of Space Toys".

Clear photos by Steve Essig constitute well over half the book, with at least one color shot per page. The text is informative and quite entertaining. The lengthy captions give important and sometimes humorous details about each toy's design, operation or packaging.



THE SCIENCE FICTIONARY

By Ed Naha
Seaview Books, \$16.95
388 pages, 1981

REVIEWED BY JOHN DIPRETE

This is yet another "encyclopedia" of science fiction. Standing on its own merits, Ed Naha's alphabetical guide to movies, authors, television shows, magazines and awards should be especially noted for its light, humorous touch. For instance, many of the film pages contain bone-spoofing hilarity in the form of out-of-context, outrageous quotes -- from old cheapie SF flicks; also, there's comical behind-the-scenes info presented throughout this section. Some really funny stuff, but primarily a serious reference volume of film, author, and TV show summaries. Concise, well-informed.

In the "Preface", Naha explains that all "opinionizing" was omitted from the book, but in point of fact, his opinions form a large section of data here. For instance, SUPERMAN is "good-natured fun combined with good intentions . . . a light-hearted winner". Fact? Or opinion? There's a few not-well-understood omissions; for instance, while small press items like LOCUS and SF REVIEW are omitted in the magazine category, ALQOL and DELAP'S F&SF REVIEW are not.

All in all, it's a good book for the SF reader and TV/movie watcher. Fully illustrated, well-done, witty -- although, for 388 pages, it seems a little overpriced. Still, recommended.

EXPANDED UNIVERSE

By Robert A. Heinlein
Ace Books, 1981, \$82 pp., \$8.95

REVIEWED BY ANDREW ANDREWS

Hallmarks of the genre, Robert A. Heinlein's science fiction novels, anthologies and non-fiction articles deal with everything from 1776-like space revolutions (THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS, 1966) to future religious cults (STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, 1961) to a new collection which enlarges your horizons while broadening your beliefs about man's present and future. This 1974 Nebula Grand Master has connected his 1966 anthology, THE WORLDS OF ROBERT A. HEINLEIN to never-before-published fiction and fact, a compilation as close to an autobiography as he'll probably ever come.

In his foreword to EXPANDED UNIVERSE, Heinlein explains that "this

new volume is about three times as long. It contains fiction stories ... nonfiction articles not available elsewhere, a 30-year updating on my 1950 prognostications ... two scenarios for the year 2000 ... and many other things.

Heinlein has written the high-technology, hard, nuts-and-bolts, or engineering type of SF common to such publications as the old ASTOUNDING and the modern ANALOG and DESTINIES magazines. Most tales deal with problem-solving and reflect man's understanding of and reaction to a rapidly changing technology. These stories deal with man's understanding of science. Indeed, in the articles in EXPANDED UNIVERSE, Heinlein deplores ignoramuses who are too stupid to understand technology, or who don't take the time to comprehend the importance of science. Heinlein clearly supports nuclear technology and space manufacturing. He hates anti-science propagandists who block the development of nuclear and other technologies. More evident in his non-fiction, but implied in his fiction, Heinlein emphasizes the importance of increased American defense spending to block world communist threats. He tells readers of his love and devotion to America and he wonders why Americans who are worth their salt don't think as he does.

I don't agree when he insists that a nuclear war is imminent or that humankind won't live to see 2000 A.D. However, I do agree with him when he writes that the educational levels of Americans are deteriorating.

I can't write about all he writes about. But among the early stories are: "Life Line" (1939), "Blowups Happen" (1940); later, "Free Men" (1966) and "Nothing Ever Happens On the Moon" (1976).

Heinlein explains that he wrote almost entirely for money -- to pay off a mortgage, to spend and save



for personal reasons. He "always firmly resolved to quit the silly business" of writing. Heinlein had no real ambition to write; he wrote merely to "get the monkey off" his back. But he also needed to soothe a creative urge and when he wrote, the more words he could put to paper, the better, he testifies.

He writes about how he sold his first boys' novels to editors who didn't care; how he wrote girls' stories (fans will understand where Puddin'/Maureen/Podkayne came from); and he includes stories unrelated to his SF works, such as the crime story, "They Do It With Mirrors", (1974).

Other stories involve patriotism, politics, and the nature of courage. Articles on conscription, nuclear weapons (where he advocates increases in nuclear armament -- more "A- or H- or C- or N- or X-bombs") are hard to stomach, and some ideas really disturb readers, such as where he explains how to prepare for a nuclear attack ... how to survive nuclear war ... but ...

Anyway, there are several "future history" articles on what social and technological issues man will confront in decades to come. Other articles include discussions on space exploration, science fiction as extrapolation/speculation, what speculative fiction is, the meaning of truth, travels in the Soviet Union, the wonders of world tours and he explains exactly why he "1) sees the slums and 2) evaluates the diet" of the countries he and his wife visit.

I would have expected and enjoyed more autobiography and less preaching; nonetheless, read EXPANDED UNIVERSE and have your consciousness . . . expanded.



THE PHAROH'S GHOST
and
THE TIME OF TERROR
By Kenneth Robeson
Bantam, \$1.95, paperback

REVIEWED BY GENE DE WEESE

In case anyone didn't know, Bantam is still working its way through the old Doc Savage pulps. They're up to 101 and 102 in this volume, so there are lots more to go. Obviously Doc isn't great literature, but he's fun once in a while and the novels are certainly superior to the campy Ron Ely movie of a few years ago.

KINDRED
By Octavia E. Butler
Pocket Books, \$2.75, Paperback

REVIEWED BY GENE DE WEESE

A young black woman, a writer, finds herself unwillingly transported, not once but several times, back to the slave state of Maryland in the early 1800s. Though only a few hours or days may pass between trips, she finds that on the plantation on which she appears each time, many years have passed. She is apparently being unwittingly "called" there by one of her own ancestors, the son of a white slave owner, whenever his life is threatened.

The story depicts her growing relationship with the boy -- later a young man -- as she repeatedly appears mysteriously to save his life. The book is at its most powerful, however, in its portrait of an independent and intelligent black woman from the 1970s adapting and surviving for months or years at a time in a slave society where even her white husband, who was inadvertently transported with her at one point, must pose as her owner. This is not the type of SF I normally enjoy, but Butler's heroine is so well drawn, sympathetic and courageous and the story so gripping and suspenseful that I literally couldn't put it down and finished it in a single evening.



TIME'S FOOL
By Grant Carrington
Doubleday, c. 1981, 180 pp., \$9.95.
REVIEWED BY STEVE LEWIS

A one-line synopsis of this book would not be difficult at all. Try this on for size: Here's the story of a famous, world-acclaimed musician as he tries to come to grips with life in the spotlight.

Of course, you know there's more to it than that, but even though Doubleday's selling the book as science fiction, it takes a while to see exactly why. For all that it takes place in a future 500 years from now, and for all that the musician Garcia's instrument, called an autar, is both computer-assisted and computer-accompanied, his world and his concerns both seem very largely unchanged from those of today.

Until, that is, Garcia is offered a chance at immortality. The real thing. There is a secret operation, privately developed and perfected and only the world's most wealthy and influential people are given the chance to undergo it.

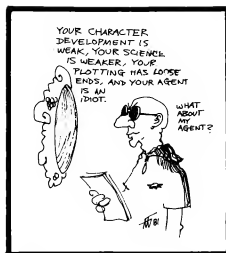
For long-time science fiction readers, if it sounds as though you have read all of this before, you probably have. The problems that would arise from the ability of the world's population to live forever are well documented in the field of SF, and Carrington's version of it is told in a deceptively simple, sparse style that stands the danger of being mistaken as hopelessly shallow.

But what Carrington does succeed in doing, if you'll give him the chance, is the slowly-developed dissection of the art, the feelings and the emotional triumph of the accomplished stage performer. It's a heady experience and in the end, it rings true. It's in this sense that the book becomes an event worth the reading.

FANTASTIC LIVES; AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL
ESSAYS BY NOTABLE SCIENCE FICTION
WRITERS
Edited by Martin H. Greenberg
Southern Illinois University Press
1981, 215 pp., \$15.00

REVIEWED BY ANDREW ANDREWS

What drives talents such as Harlan Ellison, Philip Jose Farmer, R. A. Lafferty, Katherine MacLean and others to write fantastic stories? To create unique worlds inhabited by unique characters? What is so awe-



inspiring about the literature of science fiction to lead people into such daring attempts to touch other peoples' fantasies?

No more wondering; here it is written. Nine fantastic lives are written down for us to learn why.

Inside, Harlan Ellison tells how his most famous SF story, "I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream" was created from a Bill Rotsler quote and a Dennis Smith illustration . . . and why he detests critics. Also, Philip Jose Farmer poses tongue-in-cheek scenarios to describe his life from birth until 1952, and the real style of life back then . . . I think . . . and, of course, his writings. R.A. Lafferty's incisive "The Case of the Moth-Eaten Magician" is inspiring and informative, but says so little about "R.A." himself -- it's more about "S.F." And there is more point in "The Expanding Mind", Katherine MacLean's story as a young girl, when she thirsted for the future by reading science fiction. How she is "convinced that fiction is the major educator of all civilizations" and how it fired her mind into selling fiction.

Barry N. Malzberg writes about life crises and other such personal conflicts "Down Here in the Dream Quarter" with his . . . And a Chaser". It examines his connections, if any, with SF. There is much depth to his explanations on why he reads and writes speculative literature ("speculative literature" is the best alternative title to the childish "science fiction" I've ever heard) . . . about ambition and the real, hard pains of science fiction writing, and why he finally wants to be able to leave the field. For good.

Jack Reynolds' "Science Fiction and Socioeconomics" is speculation about the political and social frameworks of SF and how such speculation is connected on a deep level with technology. The essay also tells of

poetry, a series of short "items" designed to jolt you into shocked recognition -- and even parts of interviews from SF REVIEW and CONSPIRACY DIGEST.

Probably the best item included is "Celine's Laws", not previously published, which is credited to Hagar Celine, one of Wilson's many fictional alter-egos (i.e., characters from ILLUMINATUS! and CAT). Celine's laws are funny and insightful as Wilson always is at his best and might have challenged PARKINSON'S LAW or THE PETER PRINCIPLE if he had developed the ideas to book length. Even in a short essay the laws are real classics of libertarian satire which would put the state out of business tomorrow if they were universally understood.

This is standard Wilson fare: the Illuminati, anarcho-libertarianism, Bell's Theorem, Discordian sociology, Tim Leary's SMILE, paganism and the occult, all of the above. If you haven't read Wilson before, this is a good sampler; if you have, and like it, here's a small bonanza, a Wilson windfall. And until the next volume of SCHRÖDINGER'S CAT appears, it will have to do.



THE SPINNER
By Doris Piserchia
DAW Books, 1980, \$1.95

REVIEWED BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT

The blurb on the back of this novel says you won't be able to put it down. Well, for once a blurb is correct. I sat up till three-thirty in the morning reading this book. It is a spellbinder.

As the novel opens, a crazed genius has constructed a machine which penetrates into an alternate universe. The object is to find oil or other sources of energy for an Earth burdened down by scarcity and an aging population. The machine in its explorations uncovers an alien. The alien, which is malevolent, then invades our world.

The rest of THE SPINNER shows us snippets of this future Earth, and the efforts to destroy the invading alien. The alien spins webs which devour any human unfortunate enough to be caught in them. There is one human, however, who is quick enough to try to destroy the alien.

An enjoyable tale, THE SPINNER nevertheless moves too fast in the opening scenes, where a gradual unfolding of the incredible danger the alien poses to humanity would have had more impact.

Such minor quibbles aside, THE SPINNER is a quick, exciting tale of alien terror. And I guarantee you, after you've finished this book you won't look at a spider web quite the same way for some time.

SHADOWS ON THE WALL
By Phyllis Reynolds Naylor
Order from: Ateneum Books, 597
Fifth Ave., NY, NY, 10017.
1980, 165 pp., \$8.95
ISBN: 0-689-30785-3.

REVIEWED BY FREDERICK PATTEN

SHADOWS ON THE WALL is a compelling but bewildering melange of mysteries. Dan Roberts is an American teenager vacationing in York, England with his parents. Dan spends most of his time visiting the historical sites in town while his parents are sightseeing in the nearby countryside. But Dan is worried. Why had his parents interrupted their routine lives to take this vacation right now? Why do they seem so worried, and what is the real reason for their trips without him? Dan himself, while visiting the Roman ruins in the city, becomes overwhelmed by such inexplicable moods of dread that he begins doubting his own sanity.

Dan makes friends with Joe Stanton, a local tour guide and taxi driver who shows him about and offers to take him to meet some real gypsies when the latter set up camp near town. But Dan soon realizes that Joe has a hidden reason for introducing him to Ambrose Faw's gypsy clan and that this may or may not be connected to a secret of the Faws' own.

By the volume's end the only things that Dan (and the reader) feel fairly sure of are that one of the mysteries has been revealed (but not solved), and that some of them are definitely caused by supernatural agents from York's Roman past. Whether the mysteries are innocuous or dangerous, whether the supernatural elements are psychic natural forces or individual ghosts deliberately seeking him, whether his human companions mean him good or ill, whether the puzzles are actually connected or whether they will remain separate, are questions still to be answered.

Naylor has done a fine job of establishing a mood of eerie suspense and of building a complex plot in which all the elements remain clearly distinct. Dan is a well-developed personality, but most of the other characters are still bundles of hidden motives at this point. (They seem genuinely friendly towards Dan, but with secret problems so desperate that they're prepared to sacrifice him if necessary.) There's some brief action at the end of the book, but not a real climax. Basically, SHADOWS ON THE WALL is merely the scene-setting first third of a novel. If the other two volumes deliver on the promise of this one, "The York Trilogy" will be a definite must-read. However, unless you like serials, you'd best wait for the other two volumes to become available before you start this first one.

AFTER DARK
By Manly Wade Wellman
Doubleday, 1980, Hardcover, \$8.95
184 pp.
ISBN: 0-385-15604-9

REVIEWED BY JAMES J.J. WILSON

Manly Wade Wellman has been publishing since the early thirties and is one of the best known of the non-traditional SF/fantasy writers. One of the strangest series in the genre is Wellman's "John the Minstrel" or "Silver John" stories published in F&SF in the sixties and actually beginning as the "John Thunstone" series in WEIRD TALES in the early forties. The only true novels in the series are THE OLD GODS WAKEN and AFTER DARK.



These stories are written in an intriguing, back-woods dialect, appropriate to the setting. Silver John is a man whose only possessions are the clothes on his back and the silver-strung guitar he carries and plays to earn occasional friends.

In AFTER DARK John comes across, a settlement of a race of people known as "Shonokins". These people supposedly evolved from a different form of animal long before man but were driven from their land by the Indians. Now, they want to use legal and other means to get their country back. The peculiarities about Shonokins are that their middle fingers are shorter than the third, their eyes and life-styles are nocturnal and they are deathly afraid of their own dead. They also seem to dabble in ancient black magic.

The story of the novel is how John and a local landowner defeat this particular group of Shonokins. The uniqueness is due to Wellman's back-woods dialect and the rustic charm of his characters. AFTER DARK is a welcome addition to the "Silver John" series and a perfect book to curl up with on a stormy night.

TRIQUARTERLY 49 (SCIENCE FICTION
ISSUE), FALL 1980

Softcover, 268 pp., \$5.95.

Available from: Northwestern University, 1735 Benson Ave., Evanston, IL, 60201.

REVIEWED BY ALLEN VARNEY

TRIQUARTERLY, Northwestern University's "international journal of art and writing", likes to do "theme issues" every so often: War stories, Westerns, contemporary Asian literature, etc. By now there's nothing left but SF and Barbara Cartland romances, so we have now an

issue guest-edited by David Hartwell and Robert O'Nepa, featuring contributions from some of the leading figures in the field. Such an academically-oriented anthology opens itself to more severe scrutiny than your average issue of ANALOG, but even so TRIQUARTERLY 49 holds up fairly well.

Algis Budrys' extensive critical introduction, "Paradise Charted", is an interesting and accurate summary of the history of the field up to about 1960, but the events thereafter are barely sketched in. Presumably this journal itself is intended to represent the recent developments in the art. The essay is followed by Tom (as opposed to Thomas M.) Disch's poem "On Science Fiction". Something of a rebuttal to John Varley's "The Persistence of Vision", it compares SF readers to paraplegics and is guaranteed to offend every fan who reads it.

The fiction begins unapologetically with an excerpt from Ian MacMillan's SMALL MUTATIONS, yet another post-catastrophe novel. The disaster here is a series of fungus mutations that cause worldwide crop failure and famine. In the 36-page excerpt a group of forgettable characters journey across a devastated American interior and encounter a community of cannibalistic religious fanatics. Ho-hum.

Things improve with Gene Wolfe's story "In Looking-Glass Castle", a beautifully-written character study set in Florida after the women have taken over and banished or disposed of almost all the men. This trendy material is handled with imagination and excellent pacing -- the only problem is, it stops dead about a third (half?) of the way into the story. This too appears to be an excerpt, though not packaged as such.

The section from Samuel Delany's STARS IN HIS POCKETS LIKE GRAINS OF SAND (a title which must go) consists of two people talking at each other for thirty pages. It's not a self-sufficient extract but holds your interest if you forget everything you have ever heard about realistic dialogue. Craig Strete's "When They Find You" is an Old West pioneer-with-Amerind-wife story transferred event for event to another planet. There are nice details and a moving conclusion, but the development is mainly summarized and the idea isn't SF in the first place. No blasters or BEMs, but this is space opera in its strictest sense. "Ginungagap", on the other hand, is the quill, the pure hard stuff. This short story is by Michael Swanwick, a new writer I suspect we'll be hearing much more from; it uses space colonies, inter-

stellar travel, black holes and the whole bit to dramatize a speculation on the nature of identity. The question isn't resolved completely but the characters are interesting, the plot novel and there are a couple of neat technological gimmicks for those who collect such things. I wonder, though, how the traditional academic community will react to such uncompromisingly technophilic material.

Ursula LeGuin adds a cachet of respectability and little else with "The White Donkey", a quiet and very ordinary virgin-and-unicorn vignette.

But the real show-stealer (as it were) is Thomas Disch's "The Pressure of Time", revised and expanded from its first appearance in ORBIT 7 (1970) and taken from the forthcoming novel of the same name. Disch is exploring questions of death and immortality here, effectively and with sensitivity, using as his premise the farfetched notion of a plague in the next century that has left most of humanity immortal, save for a small minority of genetically-dominant mortals. Emma Rosetti, the story's Irish Catholic protagonist, must grapple with her God and her own mortality, even while those around her seem to have attained Heaven on Earth. That she is an active and decisive character is what saves "The Pressure of Time" from the tedium that marked Disch's recent ON WINGS OF SONG; Disch here and in other stories with this background, has shown every sign of surpassing his masterpiece, 334 -- heretofore the most sophisticated novel in the field -- and in fact is quietly reshaping contemporary SF.

It is "The Pressure of Time" as well as the works by Swanwick, Wolfe



and Budrys that lift TRIQUARTERLY 49 above mediocrity. For the rest, they might better have been replaced by Wilhelm, Lafferty, Bryant, Dozois or Bunch, but who knows what the academics will like? Be glad there's enough for every taste.

HELLSTONE

By Steven Spruill
Playboy Paperbacks, 1980
320 pp., \$2.50
ISBN: 0-872-16768-2

REVIEWED BY RONALD R. LAMBERT

While marketed as a thriller, HELLSTONE is also science fiction. The author of KEEPERS OF THE GATE, THE PSYCHOPATH PLAGUE and THE JANUS EQUATION has not forsaken us.

Some people might think that after all the millions of words that have been written speculating about the Loch Ness Monster, Nessie could no longer surprise us whatever it turned out to be (if anything at all). But be advised, Spruill has come up with a startling, horrifying new wrinkle. His Nessie is a genuine monster.

Despite the impression given by the cover blurbs, HELLSTONE is not an occult/supernatural tale. It is straight science fiction with a little psi. It will chill you and thrill you and keep you awake long into the night. Chyndonax was a ba-a-ad Druid!

ROBERT A. HEINLEIN: AMERICA

AS SCIENCE FICTION
By H. Bruce Franklin
Oxford University Press, 232 pp.,
\$18.95 hardcover, \$4.95 paperback.

REVIEWED BY TOM STAICAR

Oxford launches its Science Fiction Writers series with this look at the life and works of Robert A. Heinlein. Franklin's acknowledgments thank Heinlein for allowing him to spend a day talking with the writer at his home. Franklin mentions that "He also read through the manuscript, saved me from some embarrassing errors, and even argued me out of a point or two". Heinlein provided him with a manuscript copy of THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST -- prior to publication of that novel.

Franklin's main argument, which holds the book together like a dissertation topic, is that Heinlein's fictional works mirror the attitudes and ideas of Americans who faced the wars, Depression and various cultural upheavals of this century. He uses research materials such as the

Missouri hometown newspaper files from the dates when Heinlein was growing up, to support his argument. His references to historical events



and the biographical details from Heinlein's life seem to provide that there is a useful connection to be made between Heinlein and America.

One example is the type of Heinlein juvenile hero who flees to space in order to express his rugged individualism and nonconformity. This hero mirrors the Americans who represented the change from the frontier-farmer-inventor lifestyles to the emerging urban-corporate-conformist lifestyles which pushed them aside. The idea of space exploration as the John F. Kennedy New Frontier theme can be seen as influenced by the Heinlein novels which preceded them.

A problem arises when Franklin attacks the ideas of Americans in the process of discussing them. Whether from the right or the left, such attacks should not intrude in a piece of writing such as this one. Franklin has a right to believe in liberal politics but these should not be presented in a critical analysis of the works of a writer. A book about America might be a good place for them -- not one about Heinlein. Franklin has a lot of complaints about how Americans live and what they believe, and these get in the way of scholarship.

FARNHAM'S FREEHOLD is shown to mirror the anti-Communism of Americans. Franklin is not attacking McCarthyism and the far right, but is simply stating that the news media were out to show that the Soviets were bad guys. On page 156, he states that Heinlein wasn't the only American having "recurring fantasies about nuclear bombs raining on American cities in a sneak attack." He adds: "This was and is a national nightmare in the only country in the world that has ever actually used atomic bombs, a country that launched sneak attacks not on military tar-

gets but on the civilian populations of two major cities".

Regardless of the fact that Heinlein's books show American attitudes, Franklin is using this book to create a soapbox from which he can broadcast his personal political ideas. I think that in 1970 or so, this might have been acceptable in a book sold to college students, but in 1981, the lack of objectivity is present within the context of a far different political climate. The Panshin book HEINLEIN IN DIMENSION was upsetting to Heinlein fans because it was not objective about Heinlein, but H. Bruce Franklin's book is a failed opportunity at a well-researched analysis of Heinlein's writings, a failure because its value is decreased by a lack of political objectivity by Mr. Franklin. Proving that Heinlein's fictional content is linked with the American attitudes of the time is not a mistake, but using the book to attack the attitudes detracts from the book's critical worth.

THE MAGICIANS OF CAPRONA

By Diana Wynne Jones
Order from: Greenwillow Books, 105
Madison Ave., NY, NY, 10016.
1980, 223 pp., \$7.95
ISBN: 0-688-84285-6

REVIEWED BY FREDERICK PATTEN

THE MAGICIANS OF CAPRONA is not a sequel to CHARMED LIFE (SFR #27, p. 39), but it's set in the same world in which magic is a natural force. Also, one of the characters from CHARMED LIFE plays a small but important role. The setting is Italy rather than England, but an alternate-universe Italy that's still divided into numerous kingdoms and duchies as it was before the Risorgimento.

Caprona is a city-state whose public works are maintained by two rival families of magicians. The Montanas and the Petrocchis have been icily competing for years, while the benevolent but ineffectual Duke has been diplomatically patronizing them both. Young Tonino and Paolo Montana haven't yet begun training in spellcraft, but they are aware that their elders are worried about the recent weakening of their family's charms. The Montanas blame the Petrocchis despite the fact that the Petrocchis' spells are also losing their force. Soon the ineffectualness of Caprona is obvious to the world, and her aggressive neighbors begin preparations to annex her. Then Tonino is magically kidnapped and the Montanas receive instructions to stop all spell-casting. To

Paolo this is proof that Caprona's weakness is the work of sorcerous enemy action, and he begins seeking their adversary -- while Tonino and one of the Petrocchi children, who have been shrunk to only a few inches in height, struggle to escape with the identity of the necromantic spy before Caprona's helpless armies are crushed.

THE MAGICIANS OF CAPRONA is a lot of fun. The emphasis is on daily life among a large family of magicians. Incidents include the pranks of the youngsters and the Montanas' alley-cat familiar, Benvenuto; the disastrous attempt of one of the sisters to use magic for household chores; the Romeo-&Juliet romance between a Montana girl and a Petrocchi boy; and the pitched street battles between two families when both use spells to humiliate each other. The plot becomes more serious when war threatens and when Tonino and the Petrocchis's Angela are enchanted by an enemy who really means to kill them, but the youngsters' efforts to escape are so ingenious (and hilarious) that the mood remains light. The climax is unfortunately a let-down, due to an overly-bland deus ex machina.

DOWNBELOW STATION

By C.J. Cherryh
DAW Books, \$2.50, 432 pp.
UEI594

REVIEWED BY C.J. HENDERSON

In what is, if memory serves, her longest work yet, Cherryh has created her strongest character and her best novel.

DOWNBELOW STATION is a story of space exploration, colonization and war. In the first few pages, she tells the history of our future space colonies. The first planet discovered with intelligent life is Pell. The Downers, childlike, simian-like creatures, help the humans of the orbiting Pell station run their station and cultivate the planet.

Things would have been fine if Man had confined himself to Sol and Pell, but as usual, he does not. Many more stations are established until finally, man has gone so far from Earth that he no longer looks on Earth as home or as the Company as boss.

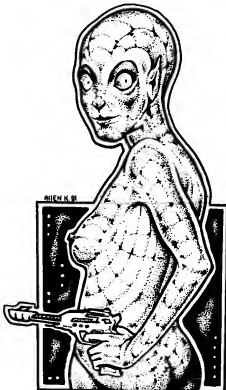
Thus, civil war. Union, as the rebels call themselves, want to break away from Earth, taking everything with them. Earth wants to keep Pell station. Pell wants to maintain its neutrality. The merchant fleets of space also want it to re-

main neutral. Mazian, head of the Company forces, has his own plans for Pell.

This leaves the two families who are responsible for Pell, the Lukases and the Konstantins in the middle of civil war, double power-play politics, spies and open warfare.

As you might guess, it is a complicated 432 pages. Cherryh does not waste a single word. There are no passages which could be omitted, no sections could be removed without destroying the delicate balance of the novel. Nearly all of the action takes place on Pell and Pell Station. Between the threat of Union, of Mazian's martial law, of the danger from the thousands of refugees from destroyed stations who have been delivered to Pell, spies sent to cripple/eliminate the station and the Lukases family ambition, the Konstantins have their hands full throughout the book.

The novel's major triumph, however, is the creation of Captain Signy Mallory. Mallory plays as tight a game in space between her commander Mazian and the rest, as Damon Konstantin plays on Pell. She is ruthless, disillusioned, tough, bulldheaded and beloved by her crew. She does not combine these traits with feminine wiles to get what she wants. She uses power and authority. Sometimes she uses them too harshly, too callously, but she does use them well.



SCIENCE FICTION STUDIES IN FILM
By Frederick Pohl and Frederick Pohl IV
Ace, 1981, 346 pp., \$6.95
ISBN: 0-441-75437-6

REVIEWED BY JAMES J.J. WILSON

SCIENCE FICTION STUDIES IN FILM is the best book on SF films yet written. In recent years, countless books on the subject have been published but most have been little more than nostalgia-ridden picture books. The thing that sets this book apart is research. Pains-taking research.

The authors have viewed and researched virtually every SF film ever made, they've interviewed people such as Harlan Ellison, and they've dug up some amazing books and newspaper clippings on the films. The result is a book that looks at SF films from two views that other books have overlooked: how these films were looked on by the public and critics at the time of their original release and how the films fit in with film and SF history.

The authors occasionally fall as film critics in that their gosh-wow attitude sometimes interferes with an objective approach to certain films. This is overcome by the sheer detail of the information they present. The Pohls have left no stone unturned in putting this book together and have produced an invaluable reference source. The book's major flaw is that it lacks an index.

THE TROUBLE WITH YOU EARTH PEOPLE

By Katherine Maclean
Dunning Company, 5041 Admiral Wright Road, Virginia Beach, VA, 23462.
1980, 237 pp., \$4.95

REVIEWED BY W. RITCHIE BENEDICT

Katherine Maclean is a rarity -- sort of a J.D. Salinger of science fiction.

In this collection of 12 stories (one written in collaboration with Tom Condit), every mood from light humor to deep tragedy and horror is represented, very definitely a mixed bag.

If there are any common themes or interests displayed in these very diverse stories, they are humor, anthropology and the problem of conformity versus individualism.

A few stories which are well-done vignettes: one ("The Carnivore" -- a tale of the last human on earth) is so slight it even misses being included in the index (unless being #13 had something to do with it?). The title of the lead story comes from aliens judging our culture only from our television program-

ming (I have often wondered about that myself). "Brain Wipe" is a fine example of man's inhumanity to man. "The Trouble with Treaties" is a puckish treatment of how the earth is saved from invasion by a cat. We have other equally odd situations in stories dealing with a planet that makes everyone end up looking alike, a planet ruled by intelligent lions that is still mired in the feudal period, escaped prisoners taking over a store in the Asteroid belt, a surgeon who has to excise the intelligence of a potential superbeing, a religious fanatic trying to convert natives with a bizarre life cycle, the wiping out of a native life form on Venus who (despite their harmless appearance) have no moral values concerning their own form of life, etc.

And there are some others I have not even mentioned such as "The Missing Man", which won a Nebula award.

This book will be a welcome addition to the collection of any true SF fan who specializes in lesser-known authors, as well as anyone who just wants an entertaining read.

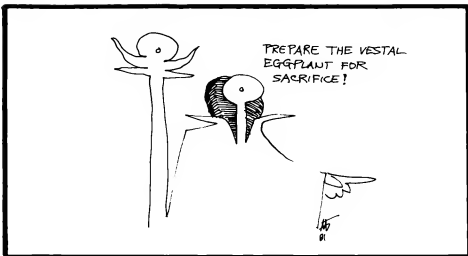
THE HUMANOID TOUCH

By Jack Williamson
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980
(SFBC Selection for November)
186 pp., \$2.49

There is also a signed, boxed, 500-copy limited edition available from Phantasia Press for \$30.00.

REVIEWED BY SUE BECKMAN

In this sequel to Williamson's most successful novel, THE HUMANIDS, 1949, a millennium has passed since the creation of the man-shaped black robots and they have spread to a million human-colonized planets. Their Prime Directive is "To serve and obey, and guard men from harm", but in fulfilling this injunction, they have regulated all hazardous activities, including sports, driving, reading, science and sex (taxes the heart, you know). Of the numerous attempts to escape their suffocating security, only one has succeeded. The people of Kai and Malili, binary planets with a very tricky orbital system, have somehow eluded the humanoids' detection. Kai is a harsh, ungiving world where, for centuries, the militaristic human colonists have endured a cycle of thirty "days" of light and thirty "days" of freezing darkness. Cities are underground, but the wealthy have additional sun-time homes on the surface. Malili, on the other hand, is a lush jungle world, inhabited by a brown-skinned, gentle, non-technological people cal-



led the Lelevo. Humans can survive on Malili only within the Zone -- an area sterilized by neutron bombs. Outside the Zone, they fall prey to deadly bloodrot.

Crewman Ryn Kyrone (the ancient shipboard terminology is still in use) is a scientist on Kai and one of a handful of people who still take the humanoid threat seriously. He and his cohorts are dismissed as paranoid fanatics for their efforts to discover the lost secrets of rhodomagnetics -- the only form of energy effective against the humanoids.

Not surprisingly, the humanoids do discover Kai and get smoothly down to the business of making people "happy". Resistance is met with drugs and brain surgery, and soon the citizens of Kai have joined the rest of humanity in becoming a race of pampered zombies. Malili, however, is curiously immune to humanoid control.

Kyrone's rhodomagnetics research has been fruitless and escape lies open only for a Lelevo/Human half-breed named Bosun Brong and Kyrone's son, Keth. Having learned the Lelevo technique of teleportation, they "jump" to Malili, seeking refuge but fearing bloodrot.

Except for the ending, THE HUMANOID TOUCH is essentially a reprise of its predecessor. Once more the humanoids are unstoppable and escape lies in paranormal mental powers. The concept of the humanoids did not begin with the novel of that name but with a novelette called "With Folded Hands" (1947). Editor Campbell so liked the story that he encouraged Williamson to write a longer version incorporating the notion of psi powers. The current Avon edition of THE HUMANIDS includes "With Folded Hands" plus an account of how it led to the novel and a candid afterword by Williamson, entitled "Me and My Humanoids".

Williamson has labeled his earliest writings as "purple prose" -- an apt description and sometimes literally true. In three consecutive paragraphs of "The Metal Man" (1928), his first published story, there are twenty-one references to color. His prose could only have been more colorful if it had been printed on red and blue paper. These early stories are awash with adjectives -- a compelling style, but a bit ornate. Now, five decades later, THE HUMANOID TOUCH seems bleached in comparison. Some of the old color and drama emerge when the action is set in the multi-hued jungles of Malili, but the rest of the story is disappointingly flat. The narrative is blatantly melodramatic at times and the writing seems rushed, dashed-off. The portrayal of Keth's desperate and lonely flight from the humanoids is skillfully done, but the love scenes are clichéd with phrases like "golden splendor" and "bared loveliness". The novel is further flawed by choppy pacing and a predictable plot -- even the revelation at the end is no surprise.

Overlooking the failed criteria for readability, it must be said that THE HUMANOID TOUCH is a thought-provoker. The real hero of the story is freedom and its role in human progress.

OTHERBORN

By Joan Gould
Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, New York
1980, 160 pp., \$8.95
ISBN: 0-698-20497-2

REVIEWED BY FREDERICK PATTEN

OTHERBORN is packaged as Young Adult science fiction. If it were really science fiction it would have too many implausibilities to be convincing. It is clearly actually a fantasy, a philosophical parable dis-

guised as SF. As such, most readers will be willing to suspend more disbelief than if the scientific element was to be taken seriously. This is to the good, because OTHER-BORN is a beautifully-written tale that offers some dreamy yet disconcertingly sharp outsiders' viewpoints towards basic social attitudes and values.

Mark and his sister Leggy (Allegra) are two young teenagers on their uncle's sailboat in the Pacific Ocean. They are swept overboard during a storm and end up on an isolated island, Hiva Oa, the Land of Light. A native youth who speaks English perfectly (though in a strangely old-fashioned manner) acts as their guide in showing them about. Yet it is soon obvious to Mark and Leggy that Tanay is only showing them a limited portion of the island, and that everyone is answering some of their questions evasively.

Gould has used the same basic plot that Swift did in GULLIVER'S TRAVELS. She has put two representatives of our own culture into an unknown Pacific island whose inhabitants are not what we would call human or civilized, but who consider themselves more human and civilized than the rest of the world and who present a good argument for their case. After the initial culture shock, Mark and Leggy see that what they had accepted as the natural way for people to live is only a way of life dictated by a particular set of artificial social standards, some of which are difficult to rationally justify. The question of whether the two will be allowed to leave Hiva Oa gradually evolves to whether they should want to? And if they do return to "civilization", what consequences will this bring to themselves and to the islanders?

MAYFLIES

By Kevin O'Donnell, Jr.
Berkley, 1979, 295 pp., paper, \$1.95

REVIEWED BY SUE BECKMAN

As the result of a freak accident Dr. G.K. Metaclura is decapitated, but his brain lives on ... and on. Metaclura becomes the ultimate cyborg when his brain is connected to the electronic innards of a starship hastily built to carry 30,000 people away from imminent atomic war and the social cesspool that 23rd-Century Earth has become. Metaclura's brain is fed the knowledge of the ages and instructed to find a habitable planet in the Canopus system. However, the programmers have failed to ask him how he feels about open spaces and immortality, so when agoraphobic

Metaclura panics 34 days into the trip and switches off the ship's ram-scoop, what was meant to take 16 years becomes a voyage of more than ten centuries. The reader follows generation after generation of passengers, first through years of escapist revelry, then decades of anarchy and gang violence and ultimately to complete cultural degeneration. Metaclura, during this time, evolves from a bodiless man with all his fears, foibles and desires still intact, to a machine among machines, fully aware of its godhood. A devastating visit by aliens creates mass paranoia in his human cargo and marks the beginning of Metaclura's long battle to wrest control of the ship from the unrelenting domination of The Program.

THE DESECRATION OF SUSAN BROWNING

By Russell Martin
Playboy Paperbacks, April, 1981
Occult/Horror, 254 pp., \$2.50
ISBN: 0-872-16802-6

REVIEWED BY PAULETTE MINARE'

The novel opens when a young Hollywood couple, Marty and Susan Browning, leave a movie just in time for Marty to "rescue" Wanda Carmichael from a rapist. Wanda is clearly interested in Marty; "gratitude" gives her the opportunity to get inside the Browning home, bearing an exquisite antique gift -- and that's when everything starts to go wrong in the Brownings' lives.

Soon Susan and Marty receive a dinner invitation to the opulent Carmichael estate. Susan is paired off with Maxwell Webster while Wanda practices her wiles on Marty. Wanda manages to spill a cocktail on her gown; she wipes it away with Marty's handkerchief which she "forgets" to return. After leaving, Susan finds her handkerchief also missing.

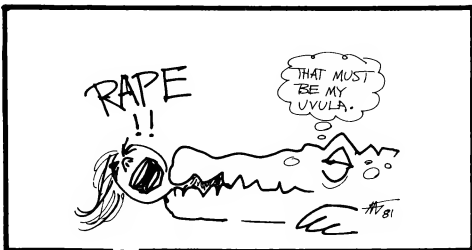
Later Wanda Carmichael, Maxwell Webster and 169 inner-circle votaries (13 x 13), stripped and donned identical hooded wool robes and entered a large secret temple where a young virgin lay naked, bound on the granite altar.

Amid ecstatic, libidinous shrieks of the robed devotees, the girl is stabbed by Wanda with a jewel-encrusted ceremonial dagger; blood gushes over the altar. Maxwell and Wanda, each in turn, soak the filched handkerchiefs in the gore-filled maiden's abdominal wound. Then before the assembly of cultists, they each perform an act which will slavishly bind the owners to them sexually.

After Marty leaves Susan for Wanda, Susan engages Yancey Bradley to investigate Wanda, and discovers a strange fact: Wanda, although in her thirties, did not exist until four years ago. Later, Yancey, in return for highly interesting rewards, doublecrosses Susan by finding her for use in Wanda's Satanist ceremony.

A baby has been born under the most unusual circumstances, fathered by "The Master", whose countenance bears grotesque signs of his parentage. This last ritual will normalize the babe's appearance. During this unspeakable ceremony, Father Al Crabbe, a friend of Susan's, manages to be a spectator. A fire breaks out; Al takes revenge on Wanda and escapes with the baby wrapped in a blood-stained blanket. You will be interested in learning his ironic reason for saving the child and the fates of the Brownings.

Russell Martin writes very realistically, mincing no words. This book is not for those who cannot stomach graphically-portrayed depravity.



STARMONT READER'S GUIDES

#5: PHILIP JOSE FARMER
By Mary T. Brizzi

#4: JOE HALDEMAN by Joan Gordon
#3: FRITZ LEIBER by Jeff Frane
\$3.95 each, paperbacks, Starmont
House, POB #851, Mercer Island,
WA 98040.

REVIEWED BY TOM STAICAR

Like the first two books in this series (ARTHUR C. CLARKE and ROGER ZELAZNY), these guides are intended for use in science fiction classes and also for the general reader who wants to know more about a favorite writer. The Starmont project is an extensive one, with 36 titles planned in the series. Each book, ranging from 60-100 pages, contains a chronology, bibliography and an index.

Mary T. Brizzi's PHILIP JOSE FARMER makes sense out of the confusing progression of heroes, settings and series which have emerged from Farmer's typewriter through the years. After a brief biographical sketch, including Farmer's bout with a publisher who cheated him out of his advance money and delayed the Riverworld series, Brizzi provides a detailed analysis of THE LOVERS, NIGHT OF LIGHT, "Riders of the Purple Wage" and the Riverworld novels. THE MAGIC LABYRINTH was not ready at publication time, unfortunately. The often religious or philosophical allusions which Farmer makes during his stories and novels are discussed here, with the result being an increased understanding of his works.

JOE HALDEMAN by Joan Gordon features some illuminating explanations about the influence which Halde- man's Viet Nam war experience had on his fiction. Names, characters and situations in altered form were the basis for much in WAR YEAR, MIND-BRIDGE, ALL MY SINS REMEMBERED and THE FOREVER WAR, although each book dealt with a different time and setting.

Jeff Frane makes the point in his book FRITZ LEIBER, that Leiber has produced so many fine works that he suffers from "a diffusion of recognition", meaning, not many outside of SF have heard of him. Awards for horror, fantasy and straight science fiction have done little for his career outside of the world of SF fandom, although Frane argues that few can match Fritz Leiber for overall excellence in fiction. A random selection of ten readers would probably name a different story each as their personal favorite.

Frane's biography mentions the influence of Leiber's theatrical family, interest in chess and his years as editor of SCIENCE DIGEST. He then provides an analysis of such novels as THE WANDERER, CONJURE WIFE

and the series of Fafhrd and Grey Mouser heroic fantasy books. Frane has done well and it's good to see someone taking notice of one of our greatest giants in a way he deserves. I hope this will begin a trend of taking Leiber's body of work more seriously.

YESTERDAY'S LILY

By Jeff Jones
Dragon's Press, 79 pp., \$8.95, pb.

REVIEWED BY MARK WILLARD

This collection is ironically being issued at about the time that Jones is withdrawing from the commercial art field. It could be considered a companion book to THE STUDIO, of which a quarter was devoted to Jones.

YL contains many things: an interview, a moderately incoherent introduction by Irma Kurtz, three short comic stories, a section of pencil sketches and one of ink drawings and lots of color art. Seventeen of Jones' paperback cover paintings are reproduced two or four to a page, smaller than the book covers they appeared on; some of the ink sketches are quite small, as well. There are 26 full-page color reproductions of covers, prints and paintings, ranging in subject matter from SF to heroic fantasy to horror to items of no definable category. There is considerably more fantasy and "mood" art than SF. They heavy-stock pages are printed on both sides. (81/2 x 11 1/2)

Paintings are identified by Jones' titles rather than by the books they appeared on, so that the viewer has little idea of what subject matter they were representing or interpreting; on the other hand, most Jones fans will recognize most paintings. (But it would be nice to be informed, for example, that the picture on page 56, top, is a detail of a larger painting -- it is.)

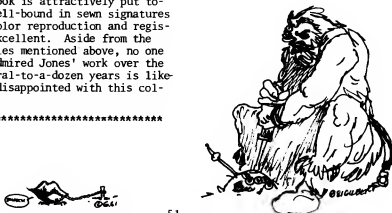
The book is attractively put together, well-bound in sewn signatures and the color reproduction and register are excellent. Aside from the few quibbles mentioned above, no one who has admired Jones' work over the last several-to-a-dozen years is likely to be disappointed with this collection.

BEASTS OF ANTARES (206 pp.)
REBEL OF ANTARES (191 pp.)
By "Dray Prescot"
DAW, #s 397 & 413, @ \$1.95

REVIEWED BY MARK WILLARD

These are the first two books of the latest cycle of Prescot's adventures #s 23 and 24 of the saga as a whole. The "Prescot of Antares" series is fairly unique among long series in that it is a true epic and not just repeated episodes. Major events and changes for good or worse take place; major characters change, develop, depart or die. The mystery surrounding the Star Lords who occasionally direct Prescot's movements is gradually being revealed, veil by veil. Large portions of the stories are simply good swashbuckling adventure in exotic alien territories, but the weight of all Prescot's previous experiences is very much present, and time and again the tales are lifted another notch above the average swords-and-politics yarn by a thoughtful insight, a bit of mature wisdom, a sobering or tragic or uproarious turn of the plot. Large doses of humor, or at any rate a generally humorous outlook on life, are included; these books are a fairly quick read unless you're really trying to keep tabs on all the minor characters and the book-to-book themes, but they're fast-moving, fun stories.

BEASTS opens with Dray Prescot handling imperial affairs in Vallia and somewhat smothered by his multitudinous friends and retainers. An airshipwreck enables him to arrive alone in the island kingdom of Hyrk-lana, scene of past adventures, where he uses his old knowledge and new skills both to rescue some friends from the arena and to advance his political aims. REBEL continues the Hyrk-lana episode, with Prescot eventually leading a revolt to topple the queen, who is leaning towards alliance with Prescot's enemies. There are surprising and gratifying developments in Prescot's relations with his widely-scattered family,



and the close of REBEL brings a new stage in his service of the Everloyn, the Star Lords. Both are worthwhile reading.

BEASTS has interior illustrations by Richard Hescox, and REBEL's are done by Jack Gaughan and rather more detailed than his usual triflepiece work.

PROJECT POPE

By Clifford D. Simak
Del Rey Books, \$10.95
ISBN: 29138-7

REVIEWED BY C.J. HENDERSON

Retirement has rested itself well on Simak's shoulders. His last novel, THE VISITORS, was a stepping stone. PROJECT POPE is the other side of the river. It is witty, at times savage, and Simak's best in a number of years.

The main story starts as Jason Tennyson escapes the port of Gutshot on the ship Wayfarer, bound for the sector of space known as End of Nothing. Jason is running for his life, leaving behind court intrigue which meant to use him as Judas Goat for its own ends. On board he meets Jill Roberts, a free-lance journalist who is headed for End of Nothing for what promises to be the story of her life.

On End of Nothing waits Vatican 17, a religious order of robots studying all of the universe's religions, trying to sift out the one true religion. Also on the planet is Thomas Decker, a mysterious hermit who just suddenly showed up one day, and his constant companion, Whisperer. Whisperer is a gaseous alien invisible to most, appearing as a shimmer of diamond dust to a select few. Jason, predictably, falls for Jill, be-friends Decker, and can see Whisperer.

But from there on in, the reader is on his own. Vatican 17 is as rife with back-room dealings and subtle power manipulators as any religious or political body ever has been. Painted with believable strokes, PROJECT POPE shows us robots twisting logic as easily as any human as they try to pin down the one true faith, and the proper way to find it.

Simak has not really given us an allegory for our time, or a religious guidebook of any sort. What he has done here is to write a very good book dealing with religious themes. It is a spellbinder. There is no preaching, no hypocrisy evident. Simak's basic message seems to be that everyone will find their own answer in time. The novel has uncompromising bigots, both human and metal. There are crazed aliens, blind fol-

lowers and even murderous robots, all trying to strike out on their own path to the future.

BEYOND REJECTION

By Justin Leiber
Random House, Inc., New York.
In Canada by Ballantine Books of
Canada, 5390 Ambler Drive, Missis-sauga, Ontario, L4W 1Y7.
1980, 177 pages, \$2.75

REVIEWED BY RITCHIE BENEDICT

It is quite rare to see a second generation in science fiction. Hugo-Award-winner Fritz Leiber's son, Justin, brings to the field some prodigious intellectual accomplishments such as an interest in linguistics and computers and a degree in philosophy.

The theme of BEYOND REJECTION is an old one -- a male mind transplanted into a female body through electronic techniques. It has been used in various configurations by many writers such as Robert Heinlein and Tannith Lee and Robert Schekley. The questions are "Does it work?" and "Has anything new been added?"

The answers are a qualified yes. A large part of the early going is taken up with exposition and scene-setting, with little action. But (a) this is a first novel and (b) it is part of a projected trilogy.

The main character is Ismael Forth, who is literally shanghaied into the body of female asteroid miner, Sally Cadmus, who met with a deep-space accident. He does not like it one bit. Particularly after he discovers that he/she now also has a prehensile tail. In the 22nd Century, this sort of transplantation is used as a means of extending life, but it has very definite limitations and immense psychological problems. The other main character is a transplantee as well, named Candy Darling, a blonde 11-year-old girl, but in actuality an 80-year-old woman who has survived six of these body switches. Together they track down the person responsible for the accidental marooning of Ismael, and who now possesses his original body. That person is a 98-year-old homicidal sex maniac with an interest in torture through the ages and presents a deadly danger to both of them.

Dealing with sex in literature can present problems. Any writer dealing with the subject has to walk a fine line between sociology, sexology and sensationalism. I think Mr. Leiber succeeded quite well, although some may feel he is too graphic at points. Some of the secondary

characters do not seem to stand out well, but maybe this is one of the deficiencies of a short novel.

THE WALL OF YEARS

By Andrew M. Stephenson
Dell, \$2.75 (paperback)

REVIEWED BY GENE DE WEESE

Travel to parallel worlds is achieved in the 21st Century, but injudicious tampering with nearby time-lines disrupts the home line and only a few million people escape to the 26th Century. From that refuge, time travelers explore the past, some intent on altering history once again, others determined to prevent further tampering. There are endless Van Vogtian complications as the characters' paths cross and re-cross in different eras and time-lines and their identities and motives aren't cleared up until the end, if then. But equally as intriguing as the intricacies of time-hopping is the grubbily realistic recreation of 9th Century England as Alfred the Great, unsuspectingly influenced by the time travelers, prepares for a pivotal battle against Guthrum and the invading Danes. Stephenson obviously knows history intimately, and he brings it to life as vividly as Harold Lamb or any historical novelist ever did. He may even send you searching for a biography of Alfred to compare notes.

STARFINDER

By Robert F. Young
Pocket Books, \$2.50 paperback.

REVIEWED BY GENE DE WEESE

Spacewhales are asteroid-like creatures whose dead bodies are converted into spaceships which use the whale's own "drive tissue" for power. When alive, however, the whales also travel through time. Spacewhaler John Starfinder enters into a "compact" with a partially converted whale when he finds it is miraculously still alive. In his travels through the "space-time sea", he unintentionally causes the death of a young woman from another era and he vows to somehow save her. It's not giving anything away to say that he and the whale eventually succeed, but only after some very complex maneuvers through time and space. Like Roger Zelazny, Young's style is richly poetic and unconventional, and the characters -- including the whale -- are engaging if not always realistic. And the story, even if you know the ending, will probably keep you guessing all the way.

AND THEN I SAW....

BY THE EDITOR

STIR CRAZY (R)

gives you a great portion of Gene Wilder and Richard Pryor in a prison comedy. These two like each other and work beautifully together--great comedy chemistry.

The story doesn't matter. Lots of sex jokes, dirty words and slapstick. Somehow, Richard Pryor can say Those Words inoffensively. A marvelous comedian.

OUTLAND (R)

is a gritty, utterly realistic science fictional variation of HIGH NOON, with Sean Connery playing a future Federal Marshal recently assigned to Io.

On this moon where a huge corporate mining operation is run by a manager out for maximum profits and production bonuses, Connery discovers the miners are being sold a powerful upper to promote extraordinary efforts.

After approximately 10 months the drug mashes their minds and they suicide, become violent...insane.

A large number of these effects are surfacing, and Connery quickly discovers he is almost alone in trying to stop the drug operation.

He is a stubborn, honest, idealistic maverick who has been assigned "hell hole" jobs for years because he won't get along by going along.

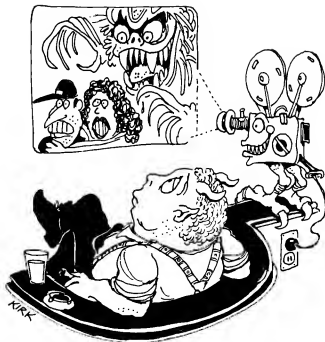
This gut-level characteristic also loses him his wife and son soon after the film begins: she has had enough of the shitty outposts he is always sent to.

Alone, abandoned, depressed, he will not yield, and the mining operation manager, in league with underworld drug suppliers, finally has to bring in a team of professional killers to eliminate Connery.

He is shunned by the miners he is trying to help and protect. The only help is from a middle-aged worn-out woman doctor.

The mining operation, the miner dormitories, the prostitutes, the nightclub where nude dancers apparently perform sexually in blue spotlights...the computers, the small hospital...the jail cells...all have the practical, functional, well-used look you'd expect. The space suits, too, are obviously simple standard issue.

The setting is real. You say, "That's the way it will be."



There are flaws: Io has one-sixth Earth gravity, but for practical reasons everyone inside the mining installation ignored that.

The outside miniature work was a bit less than convincing.

A nice variation in the formula was the life-scarred woman doctor, not having her and Connery fall in love, and the use of shotguns (though heat-seeking aiming computers were used by the killers.)

Well worth seeing.

THIEF (R)

has uncompromising realism and authenticity as it follows a top-rank professional safe cracker as he struggles to maintain his independence from organized crime.

James Caan as the thief wants a loving woman, a child, a secure future. He thinks of his work as a high-risk business. He is not able to "go along" with payoffs to the cops, the pretentious adoption agencies, or being told what to do when by a crime biggie who tries to recruit him.

But he does succumb to the lure of a multi-million dollar job involving a nearly impregnable Swedish-built safe in a huge gem dealer's high rise suite of offices. The crime biggie sets it up for him and after the job refuses to make a complete payoff.

The result is a climactic shoot-out involving pride, revenge and a fatal misjudgement of character.

This is a grim, violent, perceptive film. The thief resents

others trying to extort part of his hard-earned money: he tells the corrupt cops, "Have you ever considered working for a living?" Nevertheless, ever, a thought about the owners of the property he is taking.

Caan is very good in this effort to show the values and dreams and no-bullshit philosophy of a man of warped integrity.

A CHANGE OF SEASONS (R)

follows Shirley MacLaine in another bedroom farce involving her husband (Anthony Hopkins), his lover (Bo Derek), and Shirley's lover (name forgotten), as well as their outraged daughter and her husband's lover's father.

It's a tit-for-tat plot as Shirley discovers her English professor hubby is involved with a lovely student and takes a lover of her own.

Bo shows her #10 breasts through a glass murky and everyone has second thoughts. MacLaine has third thoughts.

SERIAL (R)

is a funny satire on the trendy upper middle-class people of rich Marin County, south of San Francisco.

It follows the lives of three or four couples, all friends, who are "into" all the latest psychology, self-fulfillment fads, dress fads, living-style fads...

Martin Mull is good as a basically straight, old-fashioned husband and father.

An asshole shrink, a liberated, orgy-minded secretary, a closet gay high-rank corporate officer, and a

"love" religious cult are ingredients that add enormously to the flavor and humor of this stew.

Four-letter words, some nice nudity.

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK (Pg)

is a 1930's-s-40's serial strung together, with close slaves, recurring death-threats to the hero and heroine, nick-in-time escapes, incredible derring-do....

And all done with such loving care and detail and authenticity... performed with such verve and sincerity, and with humor....

With built-in clichés reversed on occasion, with deft tributes to old-time actors and serials....

What George Lucas as prime mover [story, Executive Producer], and Steven Spielberg [Director] have done is create a new action/adventure form for the movies by re-creating the serial, linking the episodes and doing it so superbly that it outshines all current competition.

This form is certainly new to the kids and young adults who make up 99% of the movie-goers today.

RAIDERS might well be also known as The Perils of Indiana Jones.

Jones is played by Harrison Ford [we know him better as Hans Solo] with a mustache and a cooler, less smart-ass temperament. With a different (30's) haircut and 30's clothes he doesn't seem the same actor.

The story revolves around Jones' attempts to reach and possess for the United States the ancient Ark of the Covenant which holds the broken pieces of the Ten Commandments tablets brought down from God by Moses.

The pre-World War II Nazis are also after the Ark because Hitler is a collector of such and because the Ark is said to be the key to tremendous power.

Jones is an accomplished archaeologist and daring treasure hunter. The opening sequence shows him penetrating a cunningly-trapped ancient native temple in South America to seize a golden statue. He escapes the deadly temple only to lose the statue to a cynical French rival, Rene Belloq, and barely escapes the natives with his life.

A few years later Belloq is aiding the Nazis in their quest for the Ark.

There are few pauses for breath in this film. It darts from crisis to crisis, from continent to continent, from menace to menace.

It is a film worth seeing twice, at least.

And, at the end, there seems to be a genuine sf element. Or religious proof of the majestic power of God, if you prefer. [The effect of

this manifest power-of-God is to reduce God to another suspense-tool and to further trivialize the core of the Christian religion. Though some moron-level Christians may see it as good propaganda for God. The young audience is too sophisticated to be positively influenced toward Christianity, I would think.] The message is that God/Ark/Christianity are as fictional as the characters and the plot, as incredible as the hairbreadth escapes and physical stunts.

THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE (R)

in some ways is too good and too old-fashioned for today's movie-goers: the recreated world of the Depression 30's is cruelly authentic--another world--and James M. Cain's story is also 30ish--moralistic, with an ironic, retribution pay-for-your-sins ending that probably doesn't sit well (subconsciously?) in today's get-away-with-it morality. The cynical twists of official justice and legal maneuver in the murder trial section of the film is, however, right-on for today, which suggests that some aspects of our society never change.

Jack Nicholson underplays a bit in this role of a con-man/criminal drifter, and Jessica Lange is a revelation after her ho-hum screaming orgy in KING KONG. She's very good when given a chance. Her animals-in-heat love scenes with Nicholson are a bit hard to accept: I'm not personally that lustful (and never was) and cannot really believe in such frantic, fervent copulation. But it plays well and does motivate the murder of Lange's middle-aged Greek husband by her and Nicholson. This is a film you can see twice; the second time you'll come to appreciate the sets, the small ironies, the subtleties of the very good acting.

AMERICAN GIGOLO (R)

glamorizes the business of the Los Angeles high-class male who sells his ability to make love skillfully and thoroughly. This in spite of the movie's frame-up for murder of the hero, played nicely and convincingly by Richard Gere.

The murder, the black pimp, the betrayal by his rich clients, by his "business" associates--all this is plotwork to make the movie work as a story. Thousands of handsome, well-educated college men who have seen this film are not going to believe that scenario will happen to them if they go to Hollywood/Beverly Hills and set up as a gigolo.

It's a sweet life, I suppose, for a very few men of a certain character and personality.

In this film Richard Gere's genuine liking for women and his compassion and professionalism ultimately save him from the murder rap. But that is probably fantasy; if most female prostitutes hate their male "johns", then probably under their charm and behind their erections, most gigolos hate their women "johns".

EXCALIBUR (R)

gives full measures of beauty, atmosphere, medieval violence and idealism.

It is the story of King Arthur and his knights of the round table (give or take a few quibbles).

Nicol Williamson's eccentric Merlin mars the film...but may also be the only element that gives variety and depth. The other actors stick to their appointed stilted dialog and fanatic/idealistic motivations.

The film asks a lot of suspension of disbelief. But it is a beautiful film to watch.

Grunches: Excalibur didn't seem ornate or impressive enough to be a magic sword; the suits of armor worn by Arthur and the knights seemed more the result of modern technology than medieval blacksmiths.

HIGH RISK (R)

raises questions of morality and ethics and the nature of our current folk heroes as it follows a clutch of unemployed auto workers on a stupid, very high risk adventure into Columbia (South America) via a drug smugglers "airline" to steal a multi-million dollar batch of American cash from the safe of a biggie drug exporter.

The combination of humor and rueful reality and violence works nicely throughout.

But the story makes you wonder: The good guys win through with the millions after grand theft, murder, prison escape, more killings....

See the film and think about it.

THE HOWLING (R)

seems at first a very low budget, inept horror movie as a beautiful young TV anchorwoman, pursuing a multiple-killer in L.A., meets with him and suffers a black-out as he attacks her.

She cannot at first remember his words or his face.

She was saved by police, who shot the young man.

Later, he is missing from the morgue.

She goes to The Colony, a rest and recuperation camp run by a famous psychiatrist.

Her fellow reporters with the TV station are running down werewolf clues...

The film becomes truly, really honest-to-god frightening when one of the locals turns into a werewolf before your eyes to the sounds of pain and crackling, adjusting bones, and visually as flesh pulses and changes, as fangs develop, as hair grows, claws come forth, and the snout thrusts forward...

He becomes a seven foot wolf and he kills one of the investigating TV reporters.

The wounds and corpses are very realistic: gruesome.

The story has a twist ending and is both ironic and tragic.

There are scenes that will remind you of FRANKENSTEIN.

THE HOWLING is really scary, and more than just a series of shocking killings.

It could have been a classic with better known, better-skilled actors, and with a slightly better script.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME (R)

is an overly contrived psychotic-revenge murder rampage movie. Melissa Sue Anderson plays a high school girl apparently killing off most of her clique in a variety of ways.

Credibility takes a fatal beating at the end, however, as a too-clever twist impales itself on impossibility.

For those who enjoy seeing a few new ways to kill people.

I'm getting a bit sick of these murder/gore vehicles.

NIGHTHAWKS (R)

is a standard cop vs. terrorist movie, set in New York, which allows Sylvester Stallone a change of pace if not of expression.

Realistic, grim, well-done set of cliches. All that said, it will hold you till the end.

PERFORMANCE (X)

suffers from bizarre sets, weird characters and incomprehensible motives...along with a minus plausibility quotient.

What you have here is a renegade mob soldier on the lam from the mob. He falls in with a menage-a-trois of the weirdest kind while seeking a hideout.

James Fox is the hunted mob enforcer, and Mick Jagger is the Strange center of the menage (involving two pretty young women.) Jagger plays a spaced-out rock star seeking...something. There are hints of homosexuality. There is artful photographing intercourse, rolling and writhing...sweat words. Some bloody killing.

Nicholas Roeg directed this and its companion...

BAD TIMING--A SENSUAL OBSESSION (X) is a botched tale of two ill-starred lovers: he is jealous, sexually enthralled, sadistic...a psychiatrist; she is a low-go, resentful, animal blonde who trades on her looks and sex skills and hates it. loves/hates the men she "conquers." Bad bargain. Bad end as she ultimately tries suicide.

Lotsa nudity, street language, realism (the emergency room procedures used to save her life) and vicious conscious and unconscious behavior. Good acting except that Harvey Keitel is miscast as the German detective who investigates the suicide attempt.

The botching is the excessive flashback and switch/cut technique used and overused. Roeg seems to be saying in his films: LOOK AT ME! I'M OBVIOUSLY THE MASTER HERE! I'M THE STAR!

Beware of authors and directors who feel it necessary to draw attention to themselves in their work.

THE INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN (R)

owes its ridiculousness to the idea that solar flares as viewed through the rings of Saturn could be so virulently radioactive as to kill two astronauts and turn the survivor into a berserk monster who has a terrible hunger for human flesh and whose flesh is literally melting and sloughing off in gobs, drips, flows and landslides.

Escaped from the secret military hospital where he has been kept since the capsule returned to Earth, the superstrong astronaut/monster is as pathetic as Frankenstein's monster---but horribly deadly...as he continues to melt, continues to leave droppings and thoroughly eaten corpses littering the landscape.

A General flies in to assist the scientist/keeper in hunting down the sorry thing. As in many, many of these low-budget films, (where logic and common sense are abandoned to save the cost of extra scenes and actors) the General does not call in help, and the monster conveniently wanders to the scientist's house where frets the scientist's heavily pregnant wife.

The General is killed, the scientist chases the monster through a refinery....guards are killed, the monster is impervious to bullets...

Finally, the creature sits down to die and melts before your very eyes to a puddle of icky gunk.

Good riddance.

THEY CAME WITHOUT WARNING (R)

has the virtue of giving some aging character actors a few weeks work. Beyond that, this idiot-plot sf movie of a shitty kind details the taking of "trophies" or "pelts" (humans) by a lone alien whose only tools and weapons are vicious little disc-like creatures which it spins through the air like frisbees; when they reach a human target they claw tight, eat, and sink ugly blood-sucking tubes into the host flesh.

The film was built stupidly around this one good special effect.

Jack Palance played the canny/crazy old woodsman who finally kills the alien by sacrificing himself. Martin Landau, Larry Storch, Cameron Mitchell, Sue Ann Langdon and some other familiar faces and names also contribute solid performances. The script was a total failure.

THE HAND (R)

is a botched attempt to pretend an artist's hand, severed in an auto accident, stays alive and, with cunning and incredible strength haunts the artist and kills his enemies---or those threatening his needs, desires, plans.

Michael Caine is a fine, underrated actor, and does the best he can, but the director doesn't play fair with the audience and ruins the film with contrived ambiguity.

Worth seeing if you like Caine. And there are some nice supporting performances. The artificial hand fitted to Caine is fascinating and menacing; alas, the potential is ignored.

AND THEN I SAW... CONTINUED ON P. 64



EIGHTY PER CENT AND SUPERMAN, TOO

Many, many years ago -- well, about two if you want to be picky about it -- in the days before I could persuade a publisher to look seriously at my own stuff, I used to take on novelisations. If there is any modern-day equivalent of the most routine hackwork of the pulp era then I reckon this is it, with the exception that a pulp writer's work was at least his own and could be as good or bad, as memorable or uninspired, as time and pressure allowed him to make it; whilst a novelist is tied to a film script, a peculiar document of committee-work and compromises where story values don't always come as high on the list of priorities as they might -- but I'll be getting to that.

Novelisers are a varied group. You get writers who are on the way up but still need the money, writers who are on the way down and can only use their craft abilities when inspiration has left them, and you also get those who aren't just passing through but who are content to pound out one forgettable scenario after another. These are the pragmatists, the ones who fit in best with the production system, and their output also makes for a stunningly dull read. But when did a novelisation ever do anything else?

I never fitted in too well. Once I got summoned down to Pinewood Studios, an endless tacky warehouse-yard behind a mansion, to be told by a producer's aide that I'd have to stop inventing new characters and incidents and stick to the script I'd been given. And then the bastards made me sit through a screening of the workprint, just to make sure I couldn't pretend I'd got the message wrong.

Most of that day has now merged into the grey area of my memory, by which fact I conclude that the visit to the Dream Factory wasn't one of the high points of my life. Only one detail sticks out, from when I was crossing a gloomy drive-through hangar on the side of one of the sound stages; I glanced up a flight of narrow stairs on the inside wall. They led to some offices, looking just about big enough for a gas ring and a transistor radio and sheafs of worksheets pinned to the walls. But there was a sign on the door which blew all of that away. It said, *Superman II* -- Editing.

Now that, I thought, is going to be a movie.

The major imaginative influence of my pre-adolescent years, far more than TV or improving books chosen by well-meaning librarians, was the American comic book. They were imported in job lots and distributed without any particular pattern or reason, and it was difficult to assemble a run of numbered issues. These days it's easier -- British franchises reprint US editions in black-and-white on the cheapest paper, scratching out references to American currency and institutions in order to substitute British equivalents in spidery handwriting. I think, all in all, I had it better. The DC group were the most available, with the Superman and Batman-centred magazines the most prominent amongst these.

The earlier celluloid versions of SUPERMAN somehow missed me. The Kirk Alyn serials and the Paramount cartoons were way before my time, and I was about five years too late for the British screenings of the TV series. The timing of the BATMAN TV series was perfect; dynamite couldn't have shifted me from in front of the screen and I never missed an episode. Basically, I was too young to know I was being mocked for my seriousness -- I now see it for the camp drive it was. I heard that, following SUPERMAN'S success, Fox was trying to reassemble the cast for a two-hour special; I hope they lose enough money to make it hurt.

I suppose the BATMAN fiasco should have made me wary of SUPERMAN I; but, once a comics-raised kid, always a comics-raised kid, and I was one of the first three in line for the Day One matinee.

I wasn't disappointed. Oh, sure, there was plenty to wince at, like the laughable train-racing sequence or that godawful Leslie Bricusse song, but somewhere deep where it mattered they'd got it right. Unlike, just for comparison, the peop-

le behind the new FLASH GORDON, who obviously had no gut-feeling for the appeal of the original, Richard Donner and his team seemed to have grasped the fact that SUPERMAN is as near as you'll get to a piece of Twentieth-Century mythology, a wish-fulfillment that you monkey around with at your peril.

It's a view, according to some of the documentary evidence, that wasn't shared by the film's producers, Alexander and Ilya Salkind and their protege, Pierre Spengler. Interviewed for the slick magazines or for the TV account of the making of the picture, all three showed the informed enthusiasm that's expected of a production team under such circumstances; a hint of the negative at this stage could panic investors and kill the picture. But an interview with Donner in MILLIMETER, the New York media magazine, after SUPERMAN I's release, gave a different angle on relationships within the team; regarding the way that the producers were attempting to hold on to the technical teams whilst stalling over actually getting the remainder of the production onto the studio floor, he said:

"That's the way Spengler works. He'll wait to the last minute always and, miraculously, we always pull it off ... This time if they screw themselves up, then they've screwed themselves up. I'm not going to go riding to the rescue ... Everytime they've negotiated at the last minute, they've lost. They tried to do it with Christopher (Reeve) and Margot (Kidder) and they lost. ... If he wants to be there and communicate with the Salkinds, that's fine. But he can't be a producer. He's not going to learn how at my expense."

We shouldn't really be surprised;

DID YOU
EVER TRY
TO SCRATCH
YOUR NOSE
WHEN YOU
CAN'T SEE
YOUR FINGER?

OR YOUR
NOSE?



BY STEVE GALLAGHER

after all, it's only the facts reflecting a popular stereotyped view of the movie producer. Once you've hired the talent and got them personally identified with the project, they'll put up with whatever stunts you try to pull on them just to see it carried through.

Or perhaps they were trying to follow the Dino de Laurentiis method of hiring a director with no particular style or following of his own simply to carry out their stated wishes. This is rather like hiring a butler when you really need a bodyguard, as a string of expensive de Laurentiis flops has shown. If that's what the Salkinds had in mind, they made a mistake in their choice of directors; Donner's early days in TV and the undistinguished nature of his feature career before *THE OMEN* made him bankable may have convinced them otherwise, but when in harness on *SUPERMAN* he showed that he was prepared to fight them whenever he needed to.

SUPERMAN I probably qualifies as much as any film can as a movie-movie; it had zip, internal consistency, technical virtuosity and a good, solid story. Its structure left the viewer with a powerful anticipation of *SUPERMAN* II, as the publicists were careful to point out that it was actually the first half of one massive two-part project. The second half would pick up and develop all of the deliberate loose ends of the first -- the re-emergence of the three Kryptonian criminals from the Phantom zone, the outcome of Lois Lane's first, unheeded suspicions about Clark Kent, the consequences of going against Jor-El's warning not to interfere in the course of human history. Wow. Something like that could knock your eye out.

But, even then, I had my suspicions. The precedent for making a movie in this tandem fashion lay in the Salkinds' previous production, *THE THREE MUSKETEERS* and its "conclusion", *THE FOUR MUSKETEERS*, both directed by Richard Lester. The claim was that the massive over-coverage which spawned two films instead of one was accidental, a miscalculation which was then turned to good effect in the cutting rooms; at least, that's what they told the angry actors who wanted to know why they'd been paid once to be exploited twice. From the sidelines it looks very much like a cheap shot that didn't quite come off.

The worrying indication was that *FOUR MUSKETEERS* was a noticeably inferior movie.

The old Hollywood expectations for a sequel were that it would generally gross about one-third of the



original on the back of whose success it rode; this had almost attained the status of a rule when *THE GODFATHER*, PART TWO blew holes in it. From that time on, blockbuster sequels became almost mandatory; and whilst there are still low-profile junk sequels like *JAWS* II, the new expectation is that the second film will be an even mightier effort than the first.

Shooting two-for-one is the obvious compromise between these extremes. Your talent comes on one contract and can't use the success of film number one as a lever to squeeze more out of you for the follow-up, and you get double value out of sets and studio space. But you also lose any opportunity you might have had to observe and learn from the reception of the first film; and in the competition for your time and attention, number one has to get the best of it. If that's not the case and you have a flop, your sequel will never see outside the film cans.

The answer to this difficulty was to shoot only those scenes for *SUPERMAN* II that were necessary; the Brando segments, the scenes within the massive "Fortress of Solitude" interior set, everything with Hackman and the three super-villains, and so on. Donner, in the quoted interview, estimated that three-fourths of *SUPERMAN* II was already in the can. Presumably the remaining quarter consisted of the Paris and Niagara Falls exteriors along with various miniature and effects shots and bridging scenes. But Donner wasn't going to let it end at that; he had plans for changes that would reshape the second film, and he also wanted to shoot new footage for the final cinematic aerial battle over New York City.

"Donner again; 'I'm lacking about four or five major scenes including a new clim-

ax -- a new end that I now have and is wonderful. ... I mean it's three-fourths done and I've got so many ideas now... so much input and thought to work with. And I have a tremendous obligation, both to the film as well as Christopher and Margot. I don't want anyone else to touch it.'"

Those plans weren't to be realised, because Donner was replaced as director on *SUPERMAN* II. Despite the extent of his involvement he's uncredited, and the byline goes to Richard Lester.

Lester, like Donner, is nobody's hack, but the opportunities to exercise any kind of real director-control over the material at this late stage must have been limited. How, then, I wondered, was *SUPERMAN* II going to shape up?

This time I managed to do even better than the first matinee. A friend in a local radio station got me fixed up with complimentary tickets for the press show -- eleven through midnight, sitting in the popcorn debris left by the *BERMUDA TRIANGLE* crowd in an overheated theatre. The place was filled, and most people looked as authentic as I did -- stuff the press show, we were here to see *SUPERMAN*. The Saul Bass shot and the tattered old hotdog ads -- anything that wasn't *The Movie* -- sent an impatient rumble through the house. But the censor's credit got a round of applause.

The film was okay but it was a sequel, not a capper. If I had to make an estimate I'd say that it achieved 80% of the success of *SUPERMAN* I. My biggest complaint is that the plot didn't work and had been badly cobbled to make it hold together, resulting in ill-made seams that my book publisher calls "shit points" -- those crucial moments where you either carry the read-

er with you or have him/her saying, "Aw, shit!" and closing the book.

Examples? Luthor builds a device that "tracks Alpha waves" and somehow leads him to Superman's Fortress of Solitude, where he takes a look around and then goes away again. The point of this is to give him bargaining power with the three super-villains -- General Zod is looking for an opponent worth the name (a pretty thin motivation -- why isn't he looking for the son of the man who banished him? When this fact emerges, it's only icing on the cake) and Luthor's knowledge is a rather transparent plot-hook to keep them strung along and to provide comic relief along the way. New powers are shown when convenient -- the ability to levitate an object by pointing a finger at it, a la Mr FAVOURITE MARTIAN, or to wipe somebody's memory on contact, or to dematerialise and reappear in several places at once. I don't doubt that if you plough your way through the comics archives the immense turn-over of story material will give you precedents for each of these; but we're not talking about that kind of accuracy, I'm talking about internal consistency. After all, you've got a willing audience that's prepared to accept the notion of a flying man, unaerodynamic and without any powered propulsion; that's an outer parameter of likelihood within which all the normal rules of storytelling apply. It isn't a precedent to throw all of the rules out of the window.

Like having a SPACE 1999 moon where footsteps crunch loudly and people hold conversations in vacuum.

I'm not trying to be picky; I'm pointing out examples of weaknesses that run through the whole film. The crystal-locked image of Superman's mother explains how Zod and his cronies could just conceivably be sprung from the Phantom Zone by "a nuclear explosion in space", and guess what we saw happen just a few scenes before ... we can take the coincidence, but we don't want to be beaten over the head with it. She also tells her son that his chances with Lois Lane are zero unless he enters a crystal chamber which will take his powers away and make him like any ordinary mortal.

Obviously she's read Larry Niven's essay, MAN OF STEEL, WOMAN OF KLEFEX, but she isn't giving any more explanations. Maybe that's Man Talk, but Jor-El doesn't seem to be anywhere around. Could it be that some cheapskate somewhere decided to drop the scenes they'd already shot with Brando so they would not have to pay him the agreed percentage on the second movie's tak-

ings? Anyway, the loss of powers will be permanent and irrecoverable. A big decision, an awesome step. He gets his powers back offscreen and without any explanation of how, which makes the whole routine into something of a damp squib. In fact, at the end of the film the whole status quo is restored, just like in an episode of a TV series. But this is a movie, and the status quo should be resolved rather than restored; if the promised SUPERMAN III ever materialises it will simply be a box-car of incidents tagged onto the end of the gray train, the world's most expensive TV special.

The main climax, the four-way battle in the centre of Metropolis, is pretty good. The street-level recreation of central Manhattan and the miniatures work are excellent. Some of the flying isn't so good -- there are distinct changes of pace



between wire-work and mattes that are actually emphasised rather than concealed in the cutting. And the whole fight is witnessed by a crowd of ... oh, dozens in the streets below. Many of the crowds' reaction shots appear to have been lifted from out-takes with people looking the wrong way and grinning, or watching the battle overhead with the same sense of awe that might be shown at a Sunday-League football match.

Eighty per cent ... that still keeps it head and shoulders above the dross that clutters up the fantasy archives, and then some. But it isn't what it promised to be and what it was all set up to be, the thunder that would roll through the personal skies of every kid who ever owned a stack of comic books, something that would let him turn to everyone who may have patronised his enthusiasm and say see, it all went

deeper than you ever suspected. Instead we've got an entertaining movie which will change nobody's prejudices. The individual routines all come off with success, but when they're added together they don't make the greater total that is the hallmark of the real story. Which rather suggests that the final assembly of the film was that and nothing more, a gathering of the extant pieces and stringing them together like beads when they should have been used like building blocks.

In which case, filming two-for-one was a creative mistake, even if it did make accounting sense. The Salkinds thought they were getting a free movie for little extra effort, Donner thought different, the two sides fell out. And other problems emerged to show up the specific vulnerabilities of such a long-haul enterprise; photographer Geoffrey Unsworth, production designer John Barry and matte artist Les Bowie all died after the release of SUPERMAN I and before the release of SUPERMAN II. Their replacements were faced with matching the work of others rather than pulling something out of the bag on their own behalf; Ken Thorne's music, whatever his own abilities may be, is an orchestrated pastiche of John Williams' original. And the whole damn thing is a year later than it was promised.

An unusually high proportion of the late-night audience -- about a fifth -- stayed on to watch the credits roll through. The last credit of all (unseen by all you junkheads who think it's okay to start walking out before a movie's actually finished) promised SUPERMAN III for next year. There's nothing in the can for this one, so it means a whole new effort from scratch the rights are there, and the Reeve and Kipper contracts have long-term options, but as to whether it's likely to be made ...

Part of me hopes not. A good idea should be developed, not milked. A serial form could do that, but a series form -- never. Lucas has seen this and put it to work in pre-devising the greater structure that the STAR WARS sequels will fall into for as long as the public will take them. He's no fool, is Lucas; he's also a film-maker and not an accountant. THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK learned from and improved upon its original in precisely the ways that SUPERMAN II didn't.

But when the credit came up, the remaining diaphans of the audience cheered. And, damn it, there was another part of me that was cheering too.

-- March 29, 1981

THE HUMAN HOTLINE

S-F NEWS BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT

REMEMBER THE ADDRESS FOR THIS COLUMN IS: ELTON T. ELLIOTT, SFR, 1899 WIESSNER DRIVE N.E., SALEM, OR 97303. PHONE: (503) 390-6753

COMMENTARY:

OBSERVATIONS ON TRENDS:

Science Fiction is a perplexing field -- just when I think a trend is surfacing, it disappears or reverses itself. Just when the magazine field seems down to its last several, then new ventures start. Rumors whisper that some of the steadiest are in danger of folding. In book publishing, Dell and Doubleday cut back (see article in this same column); Ace increases output; Tor joins the fray with successful figures already on their first few titles; Holt and Houghton-Mifflin increase their involvement. For every line or magazine that fails, another takes its place or carves out a new niche.

Authors who make their livings in the trenches report a gloomier outlook -- one said, "It's like a ghost town out there; nobody is buying, with few exceptions". Another reports that publishers delay signing of contracts because of a cash shortage to cover advances and royalties in the same month -- for some, it's still a hand-to-mouth cash flow, from the bank to bill collectors.

One trend observed is the tendency to market SF trilogies or series as "future family" sagas in hope of capturing legions of readers who buy these historical sagas. Examples are The Phoenix Legacy trilogy by M.K. Wren and TOMORROW'S HERITAGE by Juanita Coulson. The day may come when "future family sagas" are as much a part of the genre as Space

Opera or Sword & Sorcery. Another trend has publishers pulling a book because of poor advance orders; THE JOYMAKERS by James Gunn (Timescape) and FREDERIK POHL'S FAVORITE SF STORIES (Berkley) are recent examples of a trend that will continue as SF becomes more prominent in publishing, and a good sale is valued more than a good book. Science Fiction seems neutral, neither booming nor busting at present.

MAGAZINE NEWS:

OMNI has been experimenting with creating an all-Science-Fiction magazine. The reprint magazine, THE BEST OF OMNI SCIENCE FICTION, proved so successful that it has upped its schedule from a one-shot to a quarterly basis and if its success continues, the name will change to OMNI SCIENCE FICTION. The magazine began printing some original SF in its second issue with Robert Silverberg's "Waiting for the Earthquake". This development coincides with a drop in the number and length of SF stories in OMNI, amid rumors that OMNI might forego SF altogether.

A new fantasy magazine, FANTASY BOOK, has been announced, to be quarterly, 8 1/2 X 11", 80 pages, set to go bimonthly beginning in January, the first issues to be out in July and October. For more info write:

FANTASY BOOK
POB #4193
Pasadena, CA 91106

Another new magazine debuting is RIGEL SCIENCE FICTION, 8 1/2 X 11",



68 pages, with a print run of 2000 copies to retail for \$1.75. It is quarterly and the first issue, according to the press release, came out in May edited by SF author, Eric Vinicoff. For more info write:

RIGEL SCIENCE FICTION
Aesir Press
POB #2523
Richmond, CA 94802

Davis Publications' first issue of SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST has one more item that I didn't cover last issue: "The Pride of Chauru" by C.J. Cherryh. They are starting a mystery digest along the lines of SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST, to be titled CRIME DIGEST and to contain excerpted fiction from mystery novels. Another fiction digest is planned but no word on what field it will cover.

Dell Distributing has sued GALILEO for back monies owed it when it distributed the last four copies of GALILEO on the newsstands in 1979.

PUBLISHING NEWS:

Ace Books has paid over \$300,000 for the right to two dozen Conan books. These include the books Ace currently has in print, plus the six original novels published by Bantam. Bantam bid against Ace, and although it lost the election, it retained book rights for the novelization of the Conan movie currently set for December release.

This is the highest amount of money Ace has paid for any package, available through Filmways, Ace's parent company, which is pumping

more cash into their publishing operations, putting Ace in the market for bigger financial projects. (This info from LOCUS.)

In July Ballantine Books starts the American Patriot series with a unique "two-step" publishing program: simultaneous release of both mass market and trade paperback editions. Both editions will be marked on the display stands.

Berkley has announced a trade program, debuting in the Spring of 1982. Most of the books will be SF under the Berkley trademark as Berkley trade paperbacks. The Berkley SF hardcover line has been discontinued after this fall's releases!

Pocket Books will begin a hardcover line in early 1982, separate from Simon & Schuster or Timescape, to come out 12 times yearly in two lists under the supervision of Pocket Editor-in-Chief, Ann Patten. It will feature successful Pocket softcover authors in cloth bindings. The Pocket hardcovers will be produced and distributed by Simon & Schuster, but will be edited, packaged and promoted by Pocket, who will also handle Rights and Art Direction.

FEVRE DREAM, George R.R. Martin's new fantasy novel, will be a Pocket hardcover.

DELL/DOUBLEDAY CUT SF PROGRAMS:

As I reported last issue, Doubleday has cut its SF program from two titles per month to one because of high editorial overhead and poor sales on the second title issued each month. As part of a general belt-tightening move by Doubleday, the Western output has been cut in half, the religion program cut and the crime club is under review. This cut means that Doubleday is inventorying through late '83 to early '84, and some titles currently scheduled were dropped.

Jim Frenkel left Dell May 1, 1981. The Dell SF program has been eliminated, with no regular SF titles scheduled after September '81. Dell had many titles under contract at the time the program closed. Authors delivering manuscripts to Dell have been urged to place them elsewhere and to return the advance, although some agents have advised authors not to return it. Several authors are contemplating legal recourse to collect monies purportedly owed them by Dell. Others are trying to pull their books on Dell's backlist, claiming Dell is in breach of contract, affecting all their works at Dell and that backlist titles should be returned to them. Dell has threatened legal action if the authors do not return their advances,

and refused to release backlist titles to them. I have no confirmed figures on the number of authors affected, but it applies to many, including some of the biggest names Dell has published.

Before anybody leaps to the conclusion that this is a part of or the beginning of a general bust in SF, there are several factors to consider: Doubleday and Dell are both owned by Doubleday, which also owns the Science Fiction Book Club and a variety of other concerns including the New York Mets baseball team. A reversal of fortunes on any of these investments could lead to a cash-flow problem, leading to belt-tightening throughout the corporate body. Doubleday's ownership of the SF Book Club creates inherent conflicts of interests inside the corporate structure, and when they recently underwent several top-level managerial changes, could have decided these conflicts were producing unwanted results and the cut was made. Any one, all or none of the above might have been the decisive factor in this action, so it is perhaps inaccurate to generalize from one specific situation to the field as a whole.

One sidenote: LOCUS in issue #245, reported that Jim Frenkel had moved on from Dell to form his own company, Blue Jay Books, which would publish SF in hardcover, trade and mass market paperbacks and was considering forming his own distribution system. I talked to Frenkel who said that the LOCUS report was "premature" and that he was still in the "process of raising money" for this company still in its "formative stages". Other sources disagreed with Frenkel, saying the company was already formed and would begin operations in the fall of this year.

AUTHOR NEWS:

Isaac Asimov has sold a new Foundation Novel, LIGHTNING ROD, to Doubleday for a \$50,000 advance, the most Asimov has received for a book, the manuscript to be turned in to Doubleday this fall. (This from SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE.)

Frank Herbert will be researching a new SF novel on a visit to Europe this summer. He and Bill Ransom will do a sequel to their novel, THE JESUS INCIDENT, and Herbert will be doing another book on computers.

Robert A. Heinlein is working on a new SF novel, title yet unchosen.

Producer Julia Phillips has announced that she has convinced Arthur C. Clarke to write a sequel to 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, and to write a screenplay of THE FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE.

Robert Silverberg has sold to Arbor House the prequel to LORD VAL-ENTINE'S CASTLE, titled MAJPOOR CHRONICLES, for a high five-figure advance.

Harry Harrison has completed a novel for Ace, INVASION: EARTH.

Roger Zelazny and Fred Saberhagen have completed a novel, COILS, for Tor Books.

Nicholas Yermakov has sold a sequel to LAST COMMUNION to Signet, titled EPIPHANY. He is also set to write Battletare Galactica's #6 and #7 for Berkley.

Frederik Pohl has sold a third book, as yet untitled, in the series which began with GATEWAY. He has turned in his new contemporary novel, SYZYGY, to Bantam.

Philip K. Dick has sold two new novels to Timescape Books: THE OWL IN DAYLIGHT, an SF-oriented novel which should cut for five-figures, and BISHOP TIMOTHY ARCHER, the first contemporary novel Dick has sold to a major publisher. He has sold Del Rey Books the reprint rights to DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP, for his largest advance to date, a reported \$50,000.

Samuel R. Delany is at work on a new book, STARS IN MY POCKET LIKE GRAINS OF SAND. A novel set in Nev-eyron, A FABULOUS FORMLESS DARKNESS, has sold to Bantam. Now all of his fiction, except for DRIFTGLASS and TIDES OF LUST is with Bantam. STARBOARD WINE, an essay collection, will be published by Dragon Press.

Marta Randall has sold two novels to Pocket, one SF and one non-SF.

Sterling Lanier has finished the sequel to HIERO'S JOURNEY.

Carl Sagen has received an additional \$200,000 for CONTACT, sold to The Book of the Month Club, and will receive an extra \$300,000 on completion and delivery of the manuscript.

Charles Sheffield and David Bischoff have sold their horror novel, THE SELKIE, to Macmillan.

Ray Bradbury was honored at the Inaugural Performance Award dinner of the Los Angeles County Mental Health Association, May 26. Chairman was Gene Roddenberry, Master of Ceremonies was Bob Newhart, and featured speakers were: Charlton Heston, Gene Kelly, Forrest J. Ackerman and Theodore Sturgeon. Messages of con-

graduations were read from Isaac Asimov, Carl Sagan, Tom Bradley (LA Mayor) and former President and First Lady, Jimmy and Roselyn Carter.

Marion Zimmer Bradley has sold a new 300-500,000-word fantasy novel MISTRESS OF MAGIC, for a \$60,000 advance, to be delivered this fall; Del Rey will do the paperback.

John Varley is to do two more novels for Berkley after DEMON, third in the Gae series, is delivered, plus he is working on the novelization of his short story "Air Raid". The title of the novel and prospective movie from Independent Producer David Beagleman is MILLENNIUM, to be published in hardcover from MacMillan. He recently turned in the movie script which has been delayed by the writers' strike.

MOVIE/TV NEWS:

Paramount will back a second Star Trek movie, produced by Harve Bennett, best known as producer for Mod Squad. The budget is \$6 million; the final product will be a TV movie or a theatrical release, depending on how the Paramount executives perceive it. For this, the first of a series, Paramount will attempt the return of all the original actors. Gene Roddenberry is listed as a consultant but will likely not be actively involved; his only recourse - if he dislikes the film is to remove his name from the credits.

It is rumored that Spock dies in the movie, purportedly because Leonard Nimoy wants out of the proposed series.

The producers of Mork & Mindy have decided that the show will take a turn towards SF next season. Also rumored is that the writers have been ordered to marry Mork & Mindy next season to placate the Wedding Minority who have complained that Mork & Mindy live immorally together without benefit of wedlock.

George Lucas, in addition to resigning from the Director's and Writer's Guilds, has resigned from The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Some see this move as damaging to the unions, and others see it as "damaging to the long term interests of Hollywood".

In Hollywood, due to informed sources, the current rash of strikes among last year's actors, this year's directors (who recently signed a new contract) and writers, has delayed production as much as two to three years on some products. Heavily affected are many SF projects and several SF writers. One person, not connected to the SF field, said, "Although I'm not a member of the

Writer's Guild, I'm not working". When asked why, the reply was, "...because if I did I'd be blackballed; the unions are that strong". Others working in Hollywood echo that opinion, sometimes word-for-word.

Phillip K. Dick's novel, DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP, is set to open next spring, the movie cost reported at \$25 million plus. (This info from SF CHRONICLE.) Del Rey has purchased novel rights. (See Author News elsewhere in this column.)

Bob Guccione, publisher of PENTHOUSE and OMNI magazines, has announced formation of Omni Productions International. O.P.I. will, among other activities, produce a nationally broadcast OMNI television program scheduled for this fall. The program will cover, in part, fast-breaking science stories the world over with bureaus in New York, Los Angeles, London, Rome, Tokyo and Toronto. The show has sold into a variety of markets, becoming the first show ever purchased for syndication by owned/operated stations from all three major networks. The show's budget has already been doubled. In addition O.P.I. will do a children's science series, four specials for 1982 and a science-related educational series.

Guccione has also announced formation of Penthouse Entertainment Television Network. P.E.T. Network will provide programming in shows where words are not bleeped, talk shows which discuss sex problems, filmed versions of PENTHOUSE magazine's "Pet of the Month" layout and sexually graphic, although not hardcore, movies. Included will be discussions of alcoholism and drugs, plus game and variety shows. Needless to say, this show will be syndicated on cable, not free TV.

AWARDS, AWARDS, AWARDS, AWARDS:

NEBULA AWARDS:

Novel: TIMESCAPE .. Gregory Benford
Novella:....."The Unicorn Tapestry"
..... Suzy McKee Charnas
Novellette:....."The Ugly Chickens"
.....Howard Waldrop
Short Story:....."Grotto of the
.....Dancing Bear"
.....Clifford D. Simak

LOCUS AWARDS:

Science Fiction Novel: ... THE SNOW
..... QUEEN
.....Joan D. Vinge
Fantasy Novel:.....LORD VALENTINE'S
.....CASTLE
.....Robert Silverberg

First Novel:DRAGON'S EGG
.....Robert L. Forward
Novella: "Nightflyers"
.....George R.R. Martin
Novellette: "The Brave Little Toaster"
.....Thomas M. Disch
Short Story: "Grotto of the
.....Dancing Bear"
.....Clifford D. Simak
Anthology:THE MAGAZINE OF
.....FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION:
.....A 30-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE
.....(Editor) Edward L. Ferman
Single-Author Collection:THE
.....BARBIE MURDERS
.....John Varley
Related Non-Fiction Book:IN JOY
.....STILL FELT
.....Isaac Asimov
Artist:Michael Whelan
Magazine:THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY
.....AND SCIENCE FICTION
Publisher:Ballantine/Del Rey

BALROG AWARDS:

Novel:THE WOUNDED LAND
.....Stephen R. Donaldson
Collection/Anthology:UNFINISHED
.....TALES
.....J.R.R. Tolkien
(Ed. Christopher Tolkien)
Professional Achievement: ..George
.....Lucas for STAR WARS and for
.....contributions to the SF/Fantasy
.....film genres
Amateur Achievement:Paul C.
.....and Susan Allen
(Editors, FANTASY NEWSLETTER)
Poet:H. Warner Munn
Artist:Frank Frazetta
Short Fiction: "The Web of the Magi"
.....Richard Cowper
Professional Publication:THE
.....MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND
.....SCIENCE FICTION
.....(Ed. by Edward L. Ferman)
1981 Science Fiction Film Hall of
Fame Award: "THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK"
1981 Fantasy Film Hall of Fame Award:
.....THE WIZARD OF OZ
Writers & Artists Panel Awards:
.....Fritz Leiber for
.....FAHRD AND THE GREY MOUSER
.....Jorge Borges --
.....Argentinian author of FICIONES

WEALTH CORRUPTS BECAUSE
WHEN THEY HAVE THE MONEY
THEY STICK IN A NEW LAYER
OF MANAGEMENT.



DEATHS:

Bill Broxon, 54, died of a heart attack, early July 1, 1981. A physician and husband of SF author Mildred Downey Broxon, he was a frequent attendee of Northwest SF Cons and was a collector and commissioner of SF art. There will be no funeral, but as per his will, there will be a Wake sometime in late July.

George O. Smith, 70, died on May 27, 1981, from a heart attack. He lived alone in Rumson, New Jersey, and had been dead for several days when his body was discovered. An SF author and former engineer, Smith was best known for his series of stories concerning a communication satellite orbiting Venus, which were collected under the title, *THE COMPLETE VENUS EQUILATERAL*, by Del Rey Books in 1976. He wrote nine other books and several score additional short stories.

James H. Schmitz, 69, died of congestive lung failure April 18, 1981. Increasing lung problems for the last half-dozen years, necessitated his retirement from the SF field in 1974. His last five weeks of life were spent in an L.A. area hospital.

JAMES H. SCHMITZ: AN APPRECIATION

Schmitz is best known for his novel *THE WITCHES OF KARRES*, a short story in the December 1949, *ASTOUNDING*, which he later expanded into novel length for Chilton in 1966 (nominated for a Hugo). Most of his stories, written in the early '60s and '70s, were set in a common background, called *The Hub*, far in the future. Humans had expanded throughout the galaxy, and many strange mental powers were in evidence. One mutant, a young woman telepath, Telzey Amberdon, was the protagonist of several novels: *THE UNIVERSE AGAINST HER* (Ace, 1964), *THE LION GAME* and a short story collection, *THE TELZEY TOY* (DAW, 1973). These stories appeared in *ANALOG*. Other stories featured another female protagonist, a non-telepath, Trigger Argee, featured in *A TALE OF TWO CLOCKS* (Dodd Mead 1962), later reissued by Ace in 1979 as *LEGACY*. Other books set in *The Hub* are the novel, *THE DEMON BREED* (Ace, 1968) and the story collection, *A NICE DAY FOR SCREAMING AND OTHER TALES OF THE HUB* (Chilton, 1965) and *A PRIDE OF MONSTERS* (Macmillan, 1970). (One story, his first-published, by *ASTOUNDING* in 1943, "Greenface", was not set in *The Hub*.) His two other books, not set in *The Hub*, are his first, *AGENT OF VEGA* (Gnome, 1960) and his last, *THE ETERNAL FRONTIERS* (Berkley-Putnam, 1973).

Schmitz was one of the most underrated authors in SF. Long before anyone else, Schmitz' female protagonists were non-stereotyped women, handled without reference to gender or competence (the hallmark of non-sexist thinking), and totally overlooked has been his delightful handling of society in *The Hub* (particularly the Overgovernment -- of the few original political units shown in SF). His presentation of mankind in *THE DEMON BREED*, is one of the most convincing statements on human ability presented in SF. Besides being ahead of his time in depicting women, he was an original thinker in the areas of sociology, political organization and human individuality; his stories at their best (in *The Hub* and elsewhere) had one very unique characteristic in SF: the stories, characters and backgrounds don't date.

I had the chance to speak with Mr. Schmitz twice when I tried to convey my enjoyment of his stories and my wish to see more. He explained that his lung congestion made writing too painful. The second time I spoke to him, he mentioned some disillusionment with the SF field. I told him his stories would stand the test of time, where some more-recognized classics would wither away into nostalgia, and that his stories and ideas were ahead of their time. He replied, "I just wish somebody would tell me what these ideas are -- I just wrote what was natural for me". Several people have told me that Schmitz was bitter toward the SF field for his lack of recognition. If so, it is sad that we should wait until a person is dead to honor him.

ACADEMIC & SMALL PRESS NEWS:

GALE RESEARCH:

Will publish in July, *TWENTIETH CENTURY SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS*. Included among the ninety writers are: Paul Anderson, Isaac Asimov, James Blish, Ray Bradbury, Philip K. Dick, Harlan Ellison, Philip Jose Farmer, Robert A. Heinlein, Ursula K. Le Guin, Frederik Pohl, Robert Silverberg, and Theodore Sturgeon.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIV. PRESS:

Will publish in July *THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE* edited by Charles G. Waugh and Martin H. Greenberg.

SCHANES & SCHANES: POB #99217 San Diego, CA, 92109

Several art portfolios: *UNICORNS* by Lela Dowling, *RIME OF THE*

ANCIENT MARINER by Greg Irons, limited to 750 signed and numbered copies, \$12; *THE FORGOTTEN BEASTS OF ELD* by Alicia Austin, limited to 1500 signed and numbered copies, \$15.

BOOK NEWS:

ACE:

August:

Hal Clement *NITROGEN FIX*
H. Beam Piper *PARATIME*
G.C. Edmondson... *TO SAIL THE CENTURY*
..... *SEA*
Avram Davidson *STRANGE SEAS*
..... *AND SHORES*
Robert Sheckley *MINDSWAP!*
..... *THE PEOPLE TRAP*
G.C. Edmondson *THE SHIP THAT*
..... *SAILED THE TIME STREAM*
Anthony Bellairs *THE FACE*
..... *IN THE FROST*
Andre Norton *ZERO STONE*
Andre Norton *STORM OVER WARLOCK*
James Patrick Baen (Ed.)... *DESTINIES*
(The last issue) #11

September:

Randall Garrett *LORD D'ARCY*
..... *INVESTIGATES*
(Related Short Story Collection)
G. Harry Stine *SPACE POWER*
(Non-fiction)
Terri Windling & Mark Arnold (Ed.):
..... *ELSENHUR*
Gordon Eklund *LORD TEDIK #3:*
..... *BLACK KNIGHT OF THE IRON SPHERE*
Gene Wolfe *THE FIFTH HEAD*
..... *OF CERBERUS*
Randall Garrett *TOO MANY*
..... *MAGICIANS*
Randall Garrett *MURDER AND MAGIC*
Philip Jose' Farmer *BEHIND THE*
..... *WALLS OF TERRA*
(4th in Wall of Tiers series)
Andre Norton *THE STARS ARE OURS*
Fred Saberhagen... *THE MASK OF THE SUN*

October:

Gordon R. Dickson *LOST DORSAL*
Frank Herbert *DIRECT DESCENT*
Rudy Rucker *SPACETIME DONUTS*
Marion Zimmer Bradley *SURVEY SHIP*
Robert Asprin (Ed.) *SHADOWS OF*
..... *SANCTUARY*
(Thieves' World 3)
Richard McEnroe *WARRIOR'S WORLD*
(4th in Buck Rogers series)
Robert Asprin (Ed.)... *THIEVES' WORLD*
Roger Zelazny *DREAM MASTER*
Clifford D. Simak *CITY*
Fred Saberhagen *AN OLD FRIEND*
..... *OF THE FAMILY*

Fall Trade-Size Paperbacks:

Orson Scott Card (Ed.) *DRAGONS OF*
..... *DARKNESS*
Larry Niven (Ed.) *THE MAGIC MAY*
..... *RETURN*
(Illustrated by Alicia Austin)
Roger Zelazny *MAIDMIND*
(Sequel to *CHANGELING*)
Illustrated by Judy King (Rienits)

Also the Venus Series by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Richard S. McEnroe is no longer with Ace.

AVON:

August:

Hannes Bok and A. Merritt...THE BLACK
.....WHEEL
Stanislaw LemTALES OF PIRX THE
.....PILOT

September:

Brian W. Aldiss NEW ARRIVALS,
.....OLD ENCOUNTERS
George ZebrowskiMACRO LIFE

October:

Linda HeldemanESBAE: A WINTER'S
.....TALE
Ralph A. SperrySTATUS QUOTIENT:
.....THE CARRIER

BANTAM:

August:

Russell Griffin CENTURY'S END
Samuel R. Delany (Ed.) NEBULA WINNER'S
.....
Gordon Williams REVOLT OF THE
.....MICRONAUTS

September:

Mike McQuayMATTHEW SWAIN: HOT
.....IN OLD TOWN
James R. BerryQUAS STARBRITE

October:

Stephen LeighSLOW FALL TO DAWN
Stephen E. McDonaldJANUS SYNDROM
Samuel R. DelanyDISTANT STARS
(A short story collection to be re-
leased as a trade paperback)

BERKLEY:

August:

Barry B. LongyearCITY OF BARABOO
Kit Reed OTHER STORIES AND
.....THE ATTACK OF THE GANT BABY
(Cover blurb says "You Will
Never Feel Safe Again")
George R.R. Martin, Ed. NEW
.....VOICES #4

September:

Elizabeth A. LynnTHE WOMAN WHO
LOVED THE MOON AND OTHER STORIES
Paul AndersonTHE CORRIDORS OF TIME
Paul H. CookTINTAGEL
Philip Jose' FarmerTHE UNREASONING
MASK
(Hardcover; also a limited edition)
Janet E. Morris CRUISER DREAMS
(Hardcover. Second in Dream
.....Dancer Trilogy)

October:

M.K. Wren HOUSE OF THE WOLF
(Concluding Volume of Phoenix
Trilogy)
Kevin O'Donnell, Jr. REEPS

Sydney J. Van Scyoc SUN WOLF
George Alec EffingerTHE WOLVES
.....OF MEMORY
(Hardcover)

DAW

August:

C.J. CherryhWAVE WITHOUT A SHORE
Karl Edward Wagner, Ed.THE YEAR'S
.....BEST HORROR STORIES: SERIES IX
John T. Phillifent KING OF ARGENT
Dray Prescott #25: LEGIONS
.....OF ANTARES
Dray Prescott #6 & 7: MANHOODS
.....ARENA OF ANTARES

September:

Tanith LeeDELUSION'S MASTER
A. Bertram ChandlerTHE ANARCH LORDS
Philip K. Dick NOW WAIT FOR
.....LAST YEAR
Lin CarterDARYA OF THE BRONZE AGE
Tanith Lee NIGHT'S MASTER

October:

Marion Zimmer Bradley SHARRA'S
.....EXILE
Jack VanceSHOWBOAT WORLD
Arthur W. Saha, Ed.THE YEAR'S BEST
FANTASY STORIES: 7
E.C. TubbTHE TERRIBLE
A. Bertram ChandlerTHE WAY BACK

DELL:

September:

Stephen Englehart THE POINT MAN

October:

No titles scheduled. See article on
Doubleday/Dell Cut SF Programs.

DEL REY:

July:

James P. Hogan GIANTS' STAR
Alan GarnerTHE ELIDOR
Alan GarnerTHE OWL SERVICE
Frederik Pohl & C.M. Kornbluth...THE
.....SPACE MERCHANTS
David BischoffTHE VAMPIRES OF
.....NIGHTWORLD
David BischoffNIGHTWORLD

GIANTS' STAR is the third in a
series that started with INHERIT THE
STARS and THE GENTLE GIANTS OF GANY-
MEDE; INHERIT THE STARS is now in its
fifth printing with over 240,000 cop-
ies in print. THE GENTLE GIANTS OF
GANYMEDE and another Hogan novel,
THRICE UPON A TIME are also over the
100,000 mark.

August:

Marion Zimmer Bradley THE HOUSE
.....BETWEEN THE WORLDS
L. Neil SmithTHEIR MAJESTIES'
.....BUCKETEERS
H. Warner Munn MERLIN'S RING
John BrunnerTHE LONG RESULT
Judy-Lynn del Rey, Ed.STELLAR
.....SCIENCE FICTION STORIES #7
William TennTHE WOODEN STAR

Also featuring a special Dragon
publicity promotion, including: THE
DRAGON AND THE GEORGE by Gordon R.
Dickson, ORPHAN STAR by Alan Dean
Foster, which features the main pro-
tagonist Flinx and his mini-drag Pip;
DRAGONFLIGHT, DRAGONQUEST and THE
WHITE DRAGON in Anne McCaffrey's best-
selling The Dragonriders of Pern se-
ries, each of the 3 volumes having
over 2/3 of a million copies in
print, with THE WHITE DRAGON leading
the way with 1,000,000+ copies and
the total for the series running to
over 2.5 million copies.

September:

Juanita CoulsonTOMORROW'S HERITAGE
Elizabeth Boyer THE ELVES AND
THE OTTERSKIN
James WhiteDEADLY LITTER
Alan Garner THE MOON OF GOMRATH
Alan GarnerTHE WEIRDSTONE
.....OF BRISINGAMEN
Lester del Rey THE ELEVENTH
.....COMMANDMENT

The Coulson is the first of a fu-
ture-family saga to be backed by a
multi-media publicity blitz, includ-
ing radio ads, press interviews, etc.
THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT has over
150,000 copies in print.

October:

Jack L. Chalker LILITH
Alexis A. GillilandLONG SHOT
.....FOR ROSINANTE
Susan DexterTHE RING OF ALLAIRE
David GerroldSPACE SKIMMER
Frederic BrownMARTIANS, GO HOME
Fletcher PrattTHE BLUE STAR

LILITH is volume #1 of THE FOUR
LORDS OF THE DIAMOND tetralogy.
Chalker's Well World series has over
900,000 copies in print.

DOUBLEDAY:

August:

Ben BovaVOYAGERS
Ron GoulartBRINKMAN
Stuart D. Schiff, Ed.WHISPERS III

September:

Suzette Haden ElginAND THEN
.....THERE'LL BE FIREWORKS
(3rd in Ozark fantasy trilogy)
Roy TorgesonCHRYSLIS NINE

October:

Marvin KayeTHE AMOROUS UMBRELLA
Charles L. Grant, Ed. ... SHADOWS IV

PLAYBOY:

August:

Philip Jose' Farmer TARZAN ALIVE

September:

John Morressy GRAYMANTLE

October:

Ron Goulart STAR HAWKS II

STARBLAZE:

August:

Marion Zimmer Bradley WEB
...OF DARKNESS
Ted White JEWELS OF ELSEWHEN
(Revised and expanded)

September:

D.C. Poyer STAR SEEDS

October:

Marion Zimmer Bradley...WEB OF LIGHT

Upcoming titles include MALLWORLD by Somtow Sucharitkul, THEY'D RATHER BE RIGHT by Mark Clifton and Frank Riley; in 1982 the first abridged publication of Marion Zimmer Bradley's THE COLORS OF SPACE, CHIMQUAR by Jan-
rae Frank, GALACTIC COMMAN by Randall Garrett (an expansion of the Laland Hale series from ASTOUNDING), an art book by Ron Miller, the former director of the Smithsonian Space Museum; three books later in '82 by Ray Faraday Nelson including TURN OFF THE SKY, described by Starblaze Editor, Hank Stine, as "the controversial Nebula nominee story ... it was never nominated, that's what the controversy is all about".

SIGNET:

August:

Stephen King FIRE-STARTER
Robert Adams SWORDS OF THE
..... HORSECLANS
Roger Zelazny TODAY WE CHOOSE
..... FACES/BRIDGE OF ASHES

September:

Ann Maxwell THE JAWS OF MENX

October:

Mike Resnick THE SOUL EATER
Arthur C. Clarke.TALES OF TEN WORLDS

TIMESCAPE:

August:

Richard Cowper ...A DREAM OF KINSHIP
(A sequel to THE ROAD TO CORLAY)
Hilbert Schenck..... AT THE EYE OF
..... THE OCEAN
David M. Alexander..... FANE
Clark Ashton Smith THE CITY OF
..... THE SINGING FLAME
Jules Verne ...20,000 LEAGUES UNDER
..... THE SEA

September:

Adam Corby THE FORMER KING
Octavia Butler WILD SEED
Somtow Sucharitkul.....STARSHIP AND
.....HAIKU

Kate Wilhelm WHERE LATE THE
.....SWEET BIRDS SANG

A fifth title for the month has not been decided; THE BEST OF WILSON TUCKER was originally scheduled but cancelled.

October:

Jerry E. PournelleKING DAVID'S
..... SPACESHIP
Ed Bryant PARTICLE THEORY
Nancy Kress THE PRINCE OF
.....MORNING BELLS
Kate Wilhelm FAULTLINES
Robert Vardeman...THE KLINGON GAMBIT
(A Star Trek novel)

Later this year they will publish THE COVENANT OF THE CROWN by Howard Weinstein, another Star Trek novel. Weinstein also wrote scripts for the Star Trek cartoon series aired on Saturday mornings several years ago.

TOR:

August:

Poul Anderson WINNERS
Harry Harrison.....THE TECHNICOLOR
..... TIME MACHINE

September:

Philip Jose' FarmerTHE CAGHE
Poul Anderson FANTASY

October:

Fred SaberhagenEARTH DESCENDED
Poul Anderson...THE GUARDIANS OF TIME

GAMECON I:

Gamecon I was held in Salem the weekend of June 26-28. It was the first gaming convention I had ever attended, and although demands on my time made it impossible to run any tournaments officially, I did play in several, finishing second in the Risk tourney.

An all-around good Con. I enjoyed my chats with Ed Simonson, one of the designers of Space Opera, out from Fantasy Games Unlimited. I heartily recommend Gamecon II for those of you who like to play board, miniatures or role-playing games.

CONCLUDING WORDS:

Due to space limitations the articles on SF displays in bookstores, one on distribution and another on censorship in SF amid the rise of the Meddling Minority, have had to be postponed.

The ankle is fine, and I'm busy working on SF BOOKLINE and SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS among other projects. See you all next issue.

AND THEN I SAW....

CONTINUED

S.O.B. (R)

is said by those who should know that this Blake Edwards film is a Revenge Movie, in which he rips certain Hollywood personages and characteristics with merciless satire and sarcasm.

No doubt. But without inside knowledge the film seems an inspired but cliché-ridden entertainment. The characters are standard malicious, vengeful, double-dealing, selfish, egotistic, amoral, kinky Hollywood types we have known and enjoyed in many previous Hollywood expose films.

The bonus here is the delicious, flesh-flaying humor, the black humor, the death humor.

And the super-deluxe extra-special bonus is THE MOMENT when Julie Andrews rips down her gown and exposes for a satisfactorily long moment her entirely lovely breasts.

The plot revolves around her (film) husband's gamble of \$16 million to salvage a movie judged a bomb by giving it overt sexual aspects--and requiring her to do the topless bit.

The movie is also merciless in its estimate of audience desires--"THEY WANT SEX!" and dirty humor, and suicide humor. And the film delivers all of that and more.

Richard Mulligan, Julie Andrews, Robert Webber, William Holden, Robert Preston, Robert Vaughn, Loretta Swit and all the rest do a marvelous job.

And running through the film is the heart-rending loyalty and love of a dog sticking by and mourning his dead master. The constant contrast of Hollywood duplicity and greed with this simple example of true and pure love is devastating.

THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN (R)

manages to strike yet another knee-jerk blow against pollution, advertising, consumer junk products, supermarket civilization...as it says all their chemicals caused Lilly Tomlin to shrink and shrink and shrink until she disappeared into a sludge of spilled something or other.

The stars of the film are the sets which make it appear Lilly is very small...smaller...and Sidney--an ape.

S F Bookline

Science Fiction Novels

Elton T. Elliott
P.O. Box 2050
Salem, Oregon 97308

TO THE READERS OF SFR:

On May 1, 1981, Thaddeus Dikty and myself formed SF Productions, Inc., an independent packager of SF-related products. Four weeks later we signed contracts with New Media Publishing, Inc. of Florida to package two magazines.

The magazines are SF BOOKLINE and SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS. SF BOOKLINE is a service-oriented publication aimed at librarians, academicians, academic libraries, booksellers, bookbuyers and serious collectors and readers of SF. It will contain reviews, articles, columns, news, interviews, lists of upcoming books and books just published. It will be 8 1/2 X 11" trim size, 48 pages. SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS will consist of four to five new never-before-published science fiction novels. Each novel will be serialized in generally from two to four installments, depending on manuscript length. Short stories will be occasionally used as "filler material" should space dictate.

SF BOOKLINE and SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS will not be distributed by the newsstand method, but will be available in specialty shops and by subscription, and will be advertised in various science fiction publications. The cover price of each will be \$1.95 and subscription rates will be \$18.00 for 12 issues, \$10.00 for six issues. They will be bimonthly through the first three issues and monthly after that. The address for subscriptions and distribution information is: New Media Publishing 12345 Starkey Road Largo, FL, 33543

SF BOOKLINE is set for January release with a March cover date and SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS is slated for February release with an April cover date.

SF BOOKLINE and SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS both buy First North American Serial Rights only, and payment is one cent per word on acceptance.

The address for Editorial Offices is: SF Productions, Inc. P.O. Box 42050 Salem, OR, 97308 Phone: (503) 390-6753

Any questions about advertising should go to the same above address. There will be display advertising in both magazines but no classifieds.

For a list of our current needs for SF BOOKLINE, query first for our general guidelines.

For SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS we want science fiction novels, (no fantasy, no horror or occult -- and no short fiction) between 40 and 100,000 words. We prefer this length but will look at longer manuscripts. Reporting time, four to six weeks, volume of submissions permitting. Query if longer than ten weeks. We accept no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts.

The SF BOOKLINE staff:

Thaddeus Dikty...Editorial Director
Elton T. Elliott...Editor
Paula K. Stiner...Editorial Associate
Ken HansenAssociate Editor
Sandra Miesel....Contributing Editor
Pamela Sargent...Contributing Editor
Marshall B. Tymn...Contributing Editor
George Zebrowski...Contributing Editor

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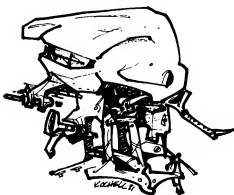
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I will have more information next column on the contents of the first issue. With these two magazines we will meet a real need. A major complaint I have heard over the years from booksellers and bookbuyers, librarians, etc., is the lack of a service-oriented magazine to give them a broader understanding of the field and to provide specific information about current titles. I believe that SF BOOKLINE is for those people, and for anybody else who has a curiosity about SF and wants to



learn more. As for SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS, it has long been apparent to me that one of the great ironies of the field is that the younger writers generally get their start in the magazine and once they have established themselves and acquired some name value they almost totally desert the magazines and concentrate on novels, to the point where today most of the best work in SF by some of the biggest names is done at novel length. This is not surprising, as book publication and novels in particular, is where the money is, so I could never understand why the SF magazines didn't recognize this and serialize more novels. This is the void SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS has set out to fill, our ecological niche, if you will.

Another item which might not be apparent to those who read only my news columns in SFR and have never talked to me, is that I have quite strongly-held beliefs about SF. I am tired of the nostalgia for yesterday's tomorrow in science fiction; what this field could use is more new-fashioned futures; extrapolation from the present world, not the SF of the past. I will develop this concept more in my editorials in NOVELS. So, if you too are fed up with the smug stagnation of a lot of current SF, SF NOVELS is your magazine. If you want well-told stories that do not insult your intelligence, then SF NOVELS is the magazine for you.



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with Stanislaw Lem; "A Nest of
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Sam Merwin, Jr.; Robert Bloch's
Guest of Honor speech; The Hein-
lein Reaction.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #14 Inter-
view with Philip Jose Farmer;
"Thoughts on Logan's Run" by Wil-
liam F. Nolan; "The Gimlet Eye" by
John Gustafson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #15 Inter-
view with L. Sprague de Camp;
"Spec-Fic and the Perry Rhodan
Ghetto" by Donald C. Thompson;
"Uffish Thots" by Ted White.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #16 Inter-
view with Jerry Pournelle; "The
True and Terrible History of Sci-
ence Fiction" by Barry Malzberg;
"Noise Level" by John Brunner;
"The Literary Masochist" by Rich-
ard Lupoff.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #17 Inter-
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terview with Robert Anton Wilson;
"Philip K. Dick: A Parallax View"
by Terrence M. Green; "Microcos-
mos" by R. Faraday Nelson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #18 Inter-
view with Lester del Rey; Inter-
view with Alan Burt Akers; "Noise
Level" by John Brubaker; "A Short
One for the Boys in the Back Room"
by Barry Malzberg.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #19 Inter-
view with Philip K. Dick; Interview
with Frank Kelly Freas; "The Note-
books of Mack Sikes" by Larry Niven;
"Angel Fear" by Preff; "The Vivi-
sector" by Darrell Schweitzer.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #20 Inter-
views: Theodore Sturgeon, and Joe
Haldeman; "Noise Level" by John
Brunner; "The Vivisector" by Dar-
rell Schweitzer; "The Gimlet Eye"
by John Gustafson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #21 Inter-
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Hamilton; Interview with Tim Kirk;
"The Dream Quarter" by Barry Malz-
berg; "Noise Level" by John Brunner.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #22 Inter-
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S-E-X" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; "After-
thoughts on Logan's Run" by William
F. Nolan; "An Evolution of Cons-
ciousness" by Marion Zimmer Bradley.

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Silverberg That Was" by Robert
Silverberg.

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views: Bob Shaw, David G. Hartwell
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of a Legend" by Algis Budrys.

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views with George Scithers, Paul
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"Flying Saucers and the Stymlie
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MAN--Part One.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #26 Inter-
views with Gordon R. Dickson and
Larry Niven; "Noise Level" by
John Brunner; "Fee-dom Road" by
Richard Henry Klump; ONE IMMORTAL
MAN--Part Two.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #27 Inter-
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Fabian; "Should Writers be Serfs
...or Slaves?"; SF News; SF Film
News; The Ackerman Interview; ONE
IMMORTAL MAN--Part Three.

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view with C.J. Cherry; "Beyond
Genocide" by Damon Knight; ONE IM-
MORTAL MAN--Conclusion; SF News;
SF Film News & Reviews.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #29 Inter-
views with John Brunner, Michael
Moorcock, and Hank Stine; "Noise
Level" by John Brunner; SF News;
SF Film News & Reviews.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #30 Inter-
views with Joan D. Vinge, Stephen
R. Donaldson, and Norman Spinrad;
"The Awards Are Coming" by Orson
Scott Card; SF News; SF Film News
& Reviews.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #31 Inter-
view with Andrew J. Offutt; "Noise
Level" by John Brunner; "On the
Edge of Futuria" by Ray Nelson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #32 Inter-
view with Andrew J. Offutt--Part
Two; Interview with Orson Scott
Card; "You Got No Friends in This
World" by Orson Scott Card; "The
Human Hotline" by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #33 Inter-
view with Charles Sheffield; "A
Writer's Natural Enemy---Editors"
by George R. R. Martin; "Noise
Level" by John Brunner.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #35 Inter-
views with Fred Saberhagen and Don
Wollheim; "The Way It Is" by Barry
Malzberg; "Noise Level" by John
Brunner; "Coming Apart at the
Themes" by Bob Shaw.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #36 Interview with Roger Zelazny; A Profile of Philip K. Dick by Charles Platt; "Outside the Whale" by Christopher Priest; "Science Fiction and Political Economy" by Mack Reynolds; Interview with Robert A. Heinlein; "You Got No Friends in This World" by Orson Scott Card.

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SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #37 Interview with Robert Anton Wilson; "We're Coming Through the Window!" by Barry N. Malzberg; "Inside the Whale" by Jack Williamson, Jerry Pournelle, and Jack Chalker; "Unities in Digression" by Orson Scott Card.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #38 Interview with Jack Williamson; "The Engines of the Night" by Barry N. Malzberg; "A String of Days" by Gregory Benford; "The Alien Invasion" by Larry Niven; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; SF News by Elton Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #39 Interview with Gene Wolfe; "The Engines of the Night"-Part Two by Barry N. Malzberg; "The Nuke Standard" by Ian Watson; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by Elton Elliott.

ALIEN THOUGHTS CONTINUED

and some b/w artwork I could use. I said fine, I'd work around his interview until his material arrived.

Only, it didn't arrive. So I decided to put it over once more. [Of course his package will get here tomorrow, due to a post office screw-up of something.]

I aim for the 10th of the month of Feb., May, July, November as the day I want to get these completed layouts to the printer. Once in a while I make it. Mostly I'm one to three days late.

I HATE BEING BEHIND SCHEDULE! This means the mailing date is three days late, usually. I aim for the 24-26th of the month, and too often don't get the mailing to the P.O. until the 27-28-29th. For some reason that pisses me.

Hank Stine called a few weeks ago and in passing mentioned he thought the current Moral Majority power moves against sex and violence on TV would eventually bring the Thou-Shalt Not See/Read/Think/Hear-What-We-Don't-Want-Thou-To-See/Read/Think/Hear crowd to attack fantasy and science fic-

tion, especially the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game.

The move against fantasy games by the New Right and the Bible thumpers would be a natural. All they'd have to do is invoke the "devil worship" angle...heathen, alien, anti-Christ influences...

There's a hint that may have already occurred. A source has told me that Jerry Fallwell, the leader of the Moral Majority, has written to a major paperback publisher and objected to one or two titles in the sf, fantasy lines, and that the publisher responded in a cowardly fashion, promising to make adjustments in titles, covers and cover and back-cover blurbs.

That's not surprising; the major paperback houses are all owned by conglomerates---CBS owns Popular Library and Fawcett, for instance---and conglomerate thinking is terrified of bad publicity. The powers-that-be don't give a damn about freedom of the press, resisting censorship, etc. They care about profits and their own growing control of the mass media. They'll easily sacrifice the freedom of content in sf and fantasy to that end. They may even agree---if they think about it---that science fiction and fantasy today are in fact subversive literature.

Before long we may find an additional set of written and unwritten taboos in place in the editorial offices in New York. Not just forbidding certain religious aspects, but outlawing certain economic and political themes as well....

The sad fact is that science fiction and fantasy's success as big sales genres may be their undoing. As long as the field was small and marginally profitable, it could be ignored---and left to its freedom. Now...what sf and fan tasy writers are saying in those weird books may disturb a lot of important, insecure people.

From the WASHINGTON STAR, 6-24-81: HOUSE CUTS SHUTTLE FUNDS, KEEPS COMET PROBE ALIVE

Over Reagan administration objections, the House voted yesterday to cut money for the Space Shuttle but decided to keep alive the option of a mission that would intercept Halley's Comet with an unmanned space probe.

To fail to keep a 1986 rendezvous in space with the comet would be false economy, backers of the mission said as the House approved a \$5 million installment toward the \$30 million-plus space shot. At the same time the House reduced by \$60 million the administration request for \$2.19 billion for the Space

LORD OF FANZINES?
MEEEEE!?!
I WONDER IF I COULD GET MY OLD JOB IN HEAVEN BACK?
POURING CORFLU INTO THOSE TEEENY TINY BOTTLES.



Shuttle program for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1. (AP)

Look at it this way: of the \$2200 million space budget for the shuttle, the House made a trivial little \$60 million spit cut, probably knowing full well the Senate will vote even a bigger budget and the compromise will be either the elimination of the House cut or an added chunk of money.

The space program is safe...because of overriding military considerations.

It'll be nice to have up-close pictures of Halley's Comet from a Voyager or Pioneer....

Below is a movie review that was crowded out of "And Then I Saw..."

THE FAN (R)

is chillingly well done. Newcomer Michael Biehn does a fine job as an increasingly psychotic fan of a Broadway star played with sad weariness and hope by Lauren Bacall.

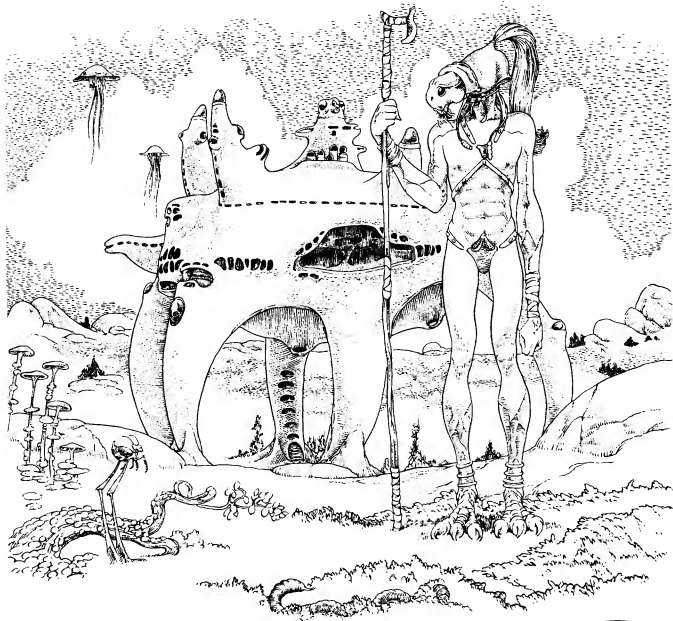
First he writes increasingly possessive and demanding letters, then begins eliminating those people who stand between him and his adored.

The audience can understand his warped reasoning. He has, he thinks, real claims on Sally Ross, and is so sure she wants him, needs him...

But she calls in the police and his love turns to hate.

This is a suspense thriller of high calibre. The photography is superb. The ending is--contrived. And Bacall doesn't pass as a 50-year-old anymore.

But see it. The supporting cast, including Maureen Stapleton, is excellent.



67

For information about other Gary Davis artwork, contact Future Dreams,
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